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ABSTRACT

This document reports on the collaborative effort of eight community foundations across the country in a demonstration project aimed at encouraging agencies which already work with teenage mothers and their children to extend services to teenage fathers and prospective fathers. The program described offered the young men a range of services to increase their potential for contributing to the financial support of the child, the social and emotional development of the child, the child's health, and family planning. It is noted that the young men who used the program came from a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds; were poor, often uneducated, and often unemployed; and were committed to their female partners and children. Components of successful programs are discussed, including a committed administrator, comprehensive services, and a realistic caseload. Counseling, assistance in returning to school or completing diploma requirements, and job training/referral are presented as highlights of the program. This report is divided into sections discussing the problem, goals, participants, documentation process, development of the collaboration, myths surrounding teenage fathers, and critical ingredients of service programs for teenage fathers. A reference list and agency/funding source descriptions are appended. (ABL)

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Lorenzo P. Martinez

September 1985

BANK STREET
COLLEGE
OF EDUCATION

THE TEEN PARENT COLLABORATION

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THE TEEN PARENT COLLABORATION:
REACHING AND SERVING THE TEENAGE FATHER

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The Authors

PREFACE

One Teen Father Tells His Story*

I'm 19 years old. I have a son whose name is Terry, Jr. He is 6 months, 1 week today and I guess I could say he's the pride of my life.

I used to see him every day but now my relationship to his mother is kind of hit the rocks so I don't have every day access to him any more. Yet I do see him maybe three, four times a week.

When I first found out Dana was pregnant, I just felt...whoa, confused. That would be the best word I could use because initially I was...I guess maybe when she told me about it, well, I guess I already knew--there was something just nagging at me, saying, "You done it now!" I think I knew too (laughs) because...well, we had been having increased sexual activity.

Now Dana and I are just friends. I see her three or four times a week, when I see Terry. She and I were like the first stable relationship I ever had. I used to think it was her fault everything went bad; but looking at it realistically, I know now that it was basically my fault. I was basically used to friends, just social friends, so I wasn't into a monogamous relationship kind of thing. I also think it was partly me wanting to--I don't know--I guess experience more. Basically run around the streets and still be a teenager. I guess that hurt our relationship a lot.

Before Terry was born I had a real interest in taking part in Dana's labor classes. I felt that I had to be there when my child was born. It was my son, not my unborn child, I knew. We always had a bond, from a couple of months old when he was in his mother's stomach, he would always respond to me. I mean, I could say things and touch him and he would move.

One time, like I and my girlfriend we were having a misunderstanding...an argument. I didn't call her, she didn't call me. Then she called me one evening: "I think I'm going to have to go to the hospital," she said. And me, in my calm way, I said, "What!" "Yeah," she said. "I think something's the matter with the baby. He hasn't moved in two days." And I said, "Hold on!" and I ran up the street to her house and got in the door and immediately just dropped to my knees and started playing with her stomach and talking to the baby and all of a sudden this little joker starts kicking and moving. It just made me feel great!

It made her feel good, very good, too. Because I don't know, I just had certain perceptions about the way I wanted to do things and we talked about a lot of things. We talked about when she was pregnant basically, and I told her, you know, "I know you didn't get pregnant by yourself and I'm going to be with you through this thing and we can do it."

When Dana was about six months pregnant she joined up in a program for teen mothers. She told me they had services for teen fathers too, but I wasn't too enthused about just running in and saying "Hi," so I came up to check this out. I knew they had Lamaze classes and that's what I wanted--but then they told me about the fathers' groups and I said "Yeah." Like a lot of these guys I said "Yeah, O.K. I'll show up, I'll come," but I didn't. Dana started nagging me--really nagging--so about a week later, I had had enough. I said "I'm going"--to get her off my back. And I went. It changed my mind completely! I thought that I was alone, that I was the only one in the world who was going to be a teen father. I didn't know what I was going to do. And I found out that I was wrong. I'm not alone. And I listened to a lot of their stories-- a lot of things they were saying and I said, "Whoa! This dude is telling my story here."

And after that I started talking. It surprised me because I've always been a shy person. I've always been someone who never would speak out in groups. I've always had that shyness in me and it surprised me because I got into that group and after about an hour of hearing these guys, I was in there telling these guys my personal life.

When I got out there, it seemed like everything was so clear. For the first time, I felt I knew what I wanted for my child and me--basically, what kind of a father I wanted to be.

You see, before I went to that group I felt a lot of my ideas were different and I didn't know how to feel about that. Like, I've always been into the nurturing aspect of fathering because, I don't know, I realized about my own father, how he dealt with us. How he treated us.

I said "Well, I'm not going to follow in my father's footsteps. I don't have to." It was a basically loving thing I thought. I didn't want to say something to my son and he does it out of fear. I wanted to have my child doing things out of love for me and his self. I don't want to sit up and read a paper and tell the kids to go out and play or do this or do that. I don't want to give orders.

Hearing those other guys saying "It's O.K., this fathering thing is O.K. You are not gay or anything. You're normal, you know!" That's how I felt. "Hey," they said, "you're not alone. These things are cool, you can do them and still be a man." It was a real confirmation.

Being a father has had some strange effects on my life. Like with me and my mother--I let her know pretty much right after Dana was pregnant and she was understanding. "It's your responsibility," she said. "I'm not going to be telling you to have the baby or to have an abortion because you are going to have to live with your decision, so you make it." But it's not as straight as that. Like, she was telling me, prior to my twentieth birthday, "Well you are a grown man now, you almost twenty years old; got you a baby." And then it came the weekend and it was "Where have you been? Why didn't you call or anything?" And I said "Hey, remember yesterday you told me I was grown?" And she said real simply, "There's only one grown person in my house. When you get your own, you're grown."

It's not just parents that let you know that you're a teen father. It's adults period. Each in their own ways. A lot say, "this guy, he aint' no good. He's got two no-good labels on him. He didn't take responsibility by putting nothing on or asking her if she used the pill or something. And the second, he didn't stick to the female; he's a run away so he's no good."

The first thing you hear about a teen father is "uh oh." It's like that old song--da da dun dun--you know, Dragnet or something. That's the way I hear people talking about us: "He ain't no good and leave him alone. They are all the same."

With my friends, things are real different now. I used to be more carefree and just out there period, you know? Now my friends are telling me, "You've become a little more subtle and subdued." I used to be the type to where my friends would be around and it would be non-stop laughter. I would just be pouring out jokes like water out of a boot. These guys would be cracking up. And now they come around and say, "What's the matter with you, guy? You're not joking or anything. What's this seriousness?" They tend to see it more in my conversation too. It's not so much b.s. anymore. I think my energy is moving in a higher direction. I realize that Terry has a lot to do with that. He's helped me realize about out here, in the streets, that there isn't that much and it's not for me. And that's real strange. I mean I used to be an animal, a party animal. Now, I don't know, it just seems it's gone.

Sometimes, when I'm holding Terry, I think to myself "It's weird, I did just what my brothers did." Two of them were teen fathers and the third was a father at 21. Even my mother and father were teen parents. And I checked this out too, my grandmother was a teen parent. So, it's been a line there. When I look at Terry I say "My God, will I be a grandfather at 35? NO!" I sort of figured I have to be the one to kind of break that pattern in my family. I got to teach Terry about condoms when he's 9 or 10. Dana is 15, you know. And her two sisters are teen mothers, too. It's pretty regular, this thing. Runs deep.

The main thing now for me is to establish paternity--to be Terry's father legally. I've started to do that and it's real hard. No matter how you do it, it doesn't make a guy feel good. They use certain phrases, like civil suit. They're filing a civil action suit against you so there it is--you're a defendant now. You're a culprit because you're an unmarried teen father. And then they want to know how you're going to support your baby. They're saying, "You owe us this much and you'll pay this much this month" and they basically don't care if you and the female are together, or if you see the baby at all, or anything--because they're just there to get child support.

They ask a lot of questions about your job if you are lucky enough to have one--where you work--your salary--your hours. And then they'll back it up by sending information forms to the job so whoever supervises you would fill those out and send them back. So, they'll make sure you are telling the truth. They either take the money out of your pay check or you send it in.

But establishing paternity is real important. If anything happens to me right now or down the line and I haven't declared paternity, Terry wouldn't be able to get certain social welfare benefits. Like social security if I died. And if my relationship with his mother broke up, how could I ever be assured I'd be a part of his life? I mean, that's usually what happens--the girls say, "Uh, uh, you're not the father, you never did declare paternity at the start, so why now?" So, I'm going through the whole process now, no matter how hard it is.

One thing, though, I'd tell other young guys who aren't fathers, don't become a teen father! I won't say it will mess up your life, because I don't feel like that. I'd say it will hold you back in some ways. You're still a teenager, yet you have this huge responsibility. HUGE! And it's almost like all at once you're expected to turn from teen to adult. It gets to where people say, "Johnny didn't know any better"; then it's overnight "You should have known better, you're a grown man now!' It's like being thrust into the adult world without knowing what happened to you. And yet you are not an adult, and they let you know that too. You just have adult responsibilities before your time!

---

* Terry L. Hollins, Sr. was a client at the Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Project in San Francisco, California.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Teen Father Collaboration grew out of an initiative by the Ford Foundation. In 1982, in cooperation with the Council on Foundations, community foundations across the country were invited to select an issue of mutual concern and to address this issue programmatically through a funding partnership with Ford.

The important issue of adolescent parenthood generated the most interest, prompting Ford to suggest two complementary directions for a funding partnership: the replication of Project Redirection, a program designed to assist economically disadvantaged young mothers; and the initiation of services for teenage fathers, a seriously neglected population.

Each community foundation chose one of these directions and selected a local service organization as its site. Ford also invited two research organizations to participate: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC), to work with the Project Redirection sites; and Bank Street College of Education, to collaborate with the sites committed to serving teenage fathers.

In April 1983, the Teen Father Collaboration was launched, with eight community foundations across the country funding the service delivery component of their chosen agency (see Table 1) and the Ford Foundation funding both the local agencies in their data collection efforts as well as Bank Street College in its role as coordinator and documentor.

It was agreed that Bank Street would (1) provide technical assistance in program development and implementation to the participating agencies; (2) disseminate information on issues related to teen fathers to both the participating agencies, and other agencies and organizations interested in beginning their own programs; (3) coordinate the collection and analysis of research data for use in documentation of the Collaboration; (4) develop effective models and guidelines for serving teenage fathers; and (5) convene national conferences for participants.

The Collaboration, a two-year national demonstration and research effort, was aimed at encouraging agencies which already work with teenage mothers and their children to extend services to teenage fathers and prospective fathers. The young men were offered a range of comprehensive services to increase their potential for contributing to the financial support of the child, the social and emotional development of the child, their child's health, and family planning. Services included vocational training, job placement, assistance in completing their education, individual counseling, parenting skills classes, pre-natal classes, group and couple's counseling and a grandparents' support group. Housed in hospitals, schools, and social service agencies, the sites provided services to teenage fathers from a wide variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. These included blacks, whites, Hispanics, Asians and American Indians. During the course of the Collaboration, 395 teenage fathers and prospective fathers were served.

Given the obvious lack of models for serving teenage fathers, each agency designed and developed its own unique program. Some agencies reached young men through their female partner who was being served by the agency; others reached their clientele through aggressive outreach activities in the community. Still others found that a combination of these strategies worked best. Various agencies emphasized different services, though all offered a core program of services which included personal counseling, vocational training, parenting skills and GED classes.

Despite the fact that each organization had its distinct program tailored to the needs of its particular organization and population, basic overall goals were shared by all agencies in the Collaboration. These were: (1) to develop effective strategies for reaching young fathers and prospective fathers; (2) to provide these young men with services appropriate to their needs, with particular emphasis on their responsibilities as fathers; (3) to document and describe the development of agency services, and the impact these services had on their lives; (4) to draw attention locally and nationally to the need for programs for this previously neglected population and; (5) to continue successful Collaboration programs beyond the duration of the demonstration.

Throughout the Collaboration, various kinds of data were collected at specified times. These consisted of an overview of agency characteristics, including its structure, size, staffing patterns, and range of services; background information on the teenage fathers, including age, ethnic background, living arrangements, sources of financial help, educational and job status, and relationship to partner; baseline data on these young men, including naturally occurring support networks, knowledge about contraception, methods of birth control and use of contraception; an ongoing log of the participation of clients in different services; a quarterly report by the agencies covering detailed activities on the recruitment of teen fathers, client referrals, direct provision of services, community development activities; and outcome data. All these data were collected by agency staff using forms which Bank Street had developed in consultation with the agencies. Additional data were collected on-site by Bank Street staff through indepth interviews with administrative and service delivery personnel, and also with a subsample of teenage fathers.

Major Findings

The major findings of the Teen Father Collaboration can be divided into three separate categories: characteristics of those young men who availed themselves of services, essential components of successful programs for teenage fathers, and highlights of program impact.

1. Characteristics of Those Young Men Who Utilized Services

The young men in the Collaboration who took advantage of services ranged in age between 15 and 19.5 years, with the majority falling between 17 and 18. A scant thirty-five percent said they were employed, with more than half of these working only part-time. Approximately seventy-five percent were not enrolled in any type of school program. A striking fifty-nine percent had dropped out of school between the ninth and eleventh grades.

The young men who utilized services came from a multitude of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, including white (25.2%), black (37.7%), Hispanic (24%), Asian (5.1%), and American Indian (7%). A high percentage of these young fathers were from Protestant backgrounds (43.7%). Over one-third were Catholic, some twelve percent claimed no religious affiliation and a small proportion of young men came from other religious backgrounds.

Just over half of all respondents said that they received all their financial support from their families, sometimes supplemented by their own earnings. Furthermore, twenty percent relied completely on public assistance, and ten percent reported some combination of family support, personal earnings and public assistance.

In their relationship to their partners, nearly seventy-five percent considered the young women their "girlfriends". Approximately ten percent were married and about the same said they were "just friends". Nearly three quarters reported that their relationships had lasted an average of two years. These findings offset the commonly held belief that teenage fathers are hit-and-run victimizers of young women. Quite to the contrary, in this population, teenage fathers were most often involved and committed to the young women.

In sum, the young men who actively utilized agency services came from a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, were poor, often uneducated and unemployed, and committed to their female partners and children. They also, as one staff worker noted, "were not guys who were trying to rip off the world--they were not so caught up in their own anger that they couldn't see us helping them." Moreover, many of the young men frequently stated that they wanted something more for their child than they had. In the words of one young father, "I want to be a better father than my father was to me. I want something different for my child from what I have." These findings may be particularly relevant in helping other agencies target teen father populations.

2. Essential Components of Successful Programs

During the two years of the Collaboration, it became evident that a successful program for teen fathers needed top-level commitment by the organization serving these young men. The organization's administrator had to be committed to raising funds for the program and believe that these young men, like teenage mothers, needed services. As proof of their commitment to serving teen fathers at least one full-time person, preferably a male, had to be hired. However, great attention had to be paid to the characteristics of this staff person so that a good "fit" existed between him and his clients. A male in his twenties or thirties, from the same ethnic and cultural background--someone with good interpersonal skills and a knowledge of his immediate community--usually worked best. Assertive and "street-smarts" characteristics were also valuable. In this regard, nearly two-thirds of the young men were recruited through a multitude of contacts sought out by the service deliverer: schools, recreational centers, local hangouts and word of mouth. Only thirty-seven percent of the young men were recruited through the female partner. Therefore, this staff member needed to be skilled at, and confident about, going into his community to tap such referral sources.

A program for teen fathers also had to provide a comprehensive array of services, including vocational counseling and job placement, parenting skills classes, educational services, and some form of regular personal counseling. Often pre-natal classes were vital to programs, as was legal advocacy work.

A realistic caseload was paramount if young men were to receive the necessary assistance they required. Although an overload of clients did not result in the failure of a program, it sometimes resulted in overly long working hours, a lag in record keeping and lowered morale. The number of clients depended on the size of the program staff and the range of responsibilities which staff members assumed (e.g., outreach, counseling, parenting skills classes, referral, community presentations, record keeping.)

3. Highlights of Program Impact

Among the 395 young men on whom the agencies kept logs, the majority sought multiple services. Almost eighty-five percent availed themselves of at least two service components, with more than three-quarters participating in three or more services. This not only underscores the host of problems these adolescents confront but the importance of offering a variety of services to young males in these circumstances.

Counseling was the single most sought out service. With few exceptions (i.e., in 382 out of 395 cases) young men participated in individual counseling sessions. These sessions dealt with a range of issues including their responsibilities as fathers, their relationship to their partner, and their attitudes and behavior toward family planning. In addition to individual counseling, 27% of these young men participated in group counseling and 12% took advantage of couples counseling.

For many fathers counseling helped in several crucial ways: to assist them in coping with the demands of early parenthood, to build stronger ties with their children, to work on their ongoing relationship to their partner, and to reduce their sense of isolation from other young men under similar, stressful situations.

Other services were also found to be useful. For example, Collaboration participants who had dropped out of high school were assisted either to return to school, or to obtain their high school equivalency diploma. Of the 155 non-graduates who were also not enrolled in school, nearly half experienced positive, educational outcomes. About one-third of these young men returned to high school, while two-thirds enrolled in and/or obtained their GED. Given the fact that early school dropout is very likely to lead to a higher rate of economic failure throughout early childhood, and therefore to less opportunity for financial contribution to one's family members, the impact of these services may bode well for better job possibilities and more opportunities for these young men to provide for their families.

In regard to their present financial contribution, it was noted that about two-thirds of Collaboration participants were unemployed job seekers at program entry. With the range of services available to these young men including job skills training, vocational training and referrals for job interviews, a total of 148 young men experienced positive employment outcomes, with 56 obtaining part-time jobs and 92 obtaining full-time jobs. Thus, as a consequence of their participation in the program counselors reported that a preponderance of these young men were helped to contribute money to their families as well as in-kind contributions (e.g., diapers, clothes, babysitting) which many had already been providing.

Longer-Term Funding

One of the main goals of the Teen Father Collaboration was to continue individual programs after the end of the demonstration. This goal has been met with seven out of eight sites having their funding in place for an additional 1 to 3 years. Most sites will receive a combination of public and private support. For example, five of the eight sites in the Teen Father Collaboration are participants in the Adolescent Family Life Collaboration, a grant received by Bank Street, from the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs (OAPP), Department of Health and Human Services. This project will also be a research and demonstration effort--one designed to assist teen mothers, fathers and their families to cope with the stresses of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood.

It should be noted that in addition to providing funds, community foundations have been instrumental in alerting their communities to the serious issue of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood--the need to serve young women and men. The programs themselves have supported this effort by the number of young men who were reached and served and the high quality of services offered to the men. These young men, in turn, have tended to become more responsible fathers.

Future Directions

In looking ahead, clearly the work of the Teen Father Collaboration, itself, must be disseminated. A handbook, for instance, describing agency programs including recruitment strategies, services, staff characteristics, will be highly beneficial to those launching their own programs. Agency staff members, themselves, may also facilitate the dissemination of their work by becoming consultants to other incipient programs.

Additional research in the field is greatly needed, not only on programs dealing with the care of pregnant and parenting teenagers, but on the prevention of this serious non-normative crisis. In this latter regard, several school-based programs have already experienced considerable success in reducing adolescent pregnancy. More such programs need support, and other models (e.g. clinic-based programs, community centers) should be researched so that the serious problem of adolescent pregnancy can finally be reduced.

TABLE 1

AGENCIES, SITES AND COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

PROGRAM SITES	PROJECT	COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
Bridgeport, CT	The Greater Bridgeport Adolescent Pregnancy Project YMCA of Greater Bridgeport	The Bridgeport Area Foundation
Louisville, KY	Teenage Parent Program of Jefferson County Public Schools	The Louisville Foundation
Minneapolis, MN	Division of Indian Work	The Minneapolis Foundation
Philadelphia, PA	Teen Fathers' Program Department of Pediatrics The Medical College of Pennsylvania Hospital	The Philadelphia Foundation
Portland, OR	NCJW Insights Boys and Girls Aid Society	The Oregon Community Foundation
Poughkeepsie, NY	The YWCA of Dutchess County	The Area Fund of Dutchess County
St. Paul, MN	Face to Face Health and Counseling, Inc.	The St. Paul Foundation
San Francisco, CA	Teenage Pregnancy & Parenting Project Family Service Agency of San Francisco	The San Francisco Foundation

TEEN FATHER COLLABORATION

FINAL REPORT

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THE TEEN PARENT COLLABORATION:
REACHING AND SERVING THE TEENAGE FATHER

CHAPTER ONE

The Problem and Its Context

The Problem

The United States continues to manifest the third highest rate of adolescent pregnancy in the developed world. Every year, more than one million teenagers become pregnant, and more than half a million give birth, many to children who are at serious developmental risk. Though many of the pressing needs of adolescent mothers and their babies have been recognized by the health, social service, educational and legal systems in this country, the teenage father has been virtually ignored. Few organizations offer young men the assistance they require in order to contribute to the well-being of their children, socially, emotionally, or financially. Adolescent pregnancy and parenting are still perceived primarily as women's issues. In large part, the needs of the adolescent father--and his potential to make important contributions to his young family--have been deemed unimportant and irrelevant.

Adolescent fathers have been treated as outcasts by service organizations for a variety of reasons: their youth, their lack of skills, their lack of resources, and the fact that they are usually not married to their child's young mother (Parke, Power & Fisher, 1980). Moreover, the legal system takes a punitive stance toward them (Wattenberg, 1983; Pannor, Evans & Massarik, 1971), treating them as "walking wallets" and demanding child support even though their employment opportunities are meager and erratic at best. Prevalent social attitudes about teen fathers continue to cast them both as "hit and run" victimizers of young women and as uncaring fathers. These myths, coupled with miniscule levels of funding for serving and studying teen fathers, have resulted in a paucity of systematic attempts to tackle the young father's practical problems and to challenge stereotypes with facts.

Concerned with this detrimental lack of services to and information about teenage fathers, in 1982 the Ford Foundation--in partnership with community foundations and social service providers in several communities across the country--began to lay the groundwork for the Teen

Father Collaboration. This report describes the Collaboration: its goals, structure, development, findings, and its implications for generating new solutions to the many problems faced by adolescent parents and their children.

The Context

When the Teen Father Collaboration was launched, relatively little was known about teenage fathers (Sander, 1982). There was some evidence, however, to suggest that adolescent fathers could benefit from assistance in their own lives, and make important contributions to their partners and children as well.

For example, some studies suggested that a father's participation in his partner's pregnancy could have positive outcomes for all concerned. Pannor, Evans & Massarik, (1968) found that when adolescent males were involved in their partner's pregnancy, the father's own self-esteem and sense of self-worth could be enhanced, and Earls and Siegel (1980) reported that the teen father's responsibility to his child could be increased under these circumstances. Moreover, an involved father-to-be could add to his partner's sense of confidence in her mothering skills (Earls & Siegel, 1980) and enhance her sense of security (Parke et al., 1980), thereby helping to reduce the young mother's ambivalence toward her child and her new situation in life (Pannor & Evans, 1967).

Research on teen fathers' reactions during the postpartum period indicated that they could be highly sensitive to their partners' and their babies' needs (Pannor et al., 1968). Meanwhile, other research was suggesting that the relationship between father and child could have important effects on children's emotional and intellectual development. For example, Pederson et al., (1969) reported that, for 5-and 6-month-old male infants, mental scores on the Bayley scale were positively correlated with the amount of father-child contact, and the cognitive performance of infants from father-present homes surpassed that of infants from father-absent homes. In a similar vein, Furstenberg (1976) found that children in father-absent homes scored lower on a variety of social adjustment measures--trust, self-esteem, and socialization--underscoring the need to help adolescent fathers remain in their children's lives whenever possible.

A number of studies found that even when teenage fathers did not live with their children many nonetheless maintained regular contact with them. Lorenzi, Klerman & Jekel, (1977) found that in the sample of 162 young males they studied, 75% reported visiting their children on a regular basis. Stack (1974) underscored this in her study of black teenage fathers, stating that many visited frequently, brought gifts to their offspring, and expressed great pride in their children. Other studies touched more directly on the theme of the young father's concern for his child's financial well-being (Platts, 1968). A few recent studies (Barrett & Robinson, 1982; Gershenson, 1983; Lieberman, 1984; Sullivan, 1985) suggest that many inner-city teenage males--in spite of having few economic resources--do, in fact, contribute to the financial support of the children they have fathered.

Establishing programs of assistance to teenage fathers was considered important for other reasons as well. The serious consequences to teenage women who become mothers--including health risks to them and their babies, and lowered potential for long-term self-sufficiency--were well documented; what was less frequently noted was that too-early parenthood could reap negative consequences in the lives of young men, too. It has been shown, for example, that young men who become fathers during adolescence differ from their peers of similar race and socio-economic status who postpone fatherhood until at least the age of 20 in several ways: they have lower income levels, less formal education, and more children. Those who have children before the age of 18 are two-fifths less likely to ever graduate from high school (Guttmacher, 1981). Thus, society pays a high cost in the lost potential of young women and young men who become parents so early in life that other kinds of possibilities and opportunities are curtailed. One measure of this loss is the billions of dollars that go every year into AFDC payments to families in which mothers first gave birth during their teenage years.

One other thing was clear at the outset of the Teen Father Collaboration: traditional service programs which only served teenage mothers, excluding their male partner, have been far from effective in solving the major national problems associated with adolescent pregnancy and parenthood. Therefore, in the most fundamental way, the Collaboration set out to forge new solutions to an old and seemingly intractable problem. Working collaboratively, all of the participants in this multi-site effort set out to focus national attention on the need to address the concerns and responsibilites of the teenage father in overcoming the many personal and social difficulties associated with adolescent childrearing.

CHAPTER TWO

The Collaboration's Goals and Organizational Participants

The Goals of the Collaboration

The Teen Father Collaboration grew out of a Ford Foundation initiative. In 1982, with the cooperation of the Council on Foundations, community foundations across the country were invited to select an issue of common concern, and then address the issue programmatically through a funding partnership with Ford.

The issue which generated the most interest was adolescent pregnancy and parenting. Ford suggested two complementary directions for the funding partnership: the replication of Project Redirection, a program designed to assist economically disadvantaged young mothers; and the initiation of new programs to address the needs of the underserved teenage father.

Each community foundation chose one of these directions and selected a local service organization as its program site. Ford also invited two research organizations to participate: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) to work with the Project Redirection sites, and Bank Street College of Education to collaborate with those sites interested in serving teenage fathers.

In all, eight program sites, with support from their funders and Bank Street, launched the Teen Father Collaboration in April, 1983. A two-year national demonstration and research effort, the Teen Father Collaboration was organizationally complex. It brought together many different kinds of people: program administrators, hands-on service providers, community planners, documentation specialists, and funders at several levels. All organizational participants worked together to accomplish several important and complementary goals:

> To develop effective strategies for reaching out to young fathers and prospective fathers;
>
> To provide these young men with an array of services that facilitate their ability to function responsibly in the fathering role;

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To document and then describe both the process of program development and the characteristics of the young men who participated in programs, including the impact of programs in these young men's lives;

To focus local and national attention on the importance of including services for teenage fathers in programs that address the many problems associated with adolescent childbearing; and

To continue successful Collaboration programs beyond the life of the demonstration, and serve as a catalyst for program development in other communities throughout the country.

Participating Organizations and Their Respective Roles

Bank Street College. Bank Street College of Education played a multi-faceted role throughout the Collaboration. Its major responsibilities included providing technical assistance in the program development process, fostering a cooperative network among all organizational participants, promoting public awareness of the need to work with adolescent fathers, and documenting all aspects of the Collaboration.

Bank Street staff offered technical assistance to the eight local program sites which were charged with the responsibility of reaching and serving adolescent fathers, both in person during intensive annual field visits, and through regular telephone contact. Bank Street also encouraged cross-site networking by facilitating direct contact among sites with similar issues, publishing a tri-annual Collaboration newsletter, and organizing annual working conferences.

The College helped promote public awareness of the need to work with the male partner in adolescent parenting by arranging for media coverage in the national press (e.g., *Newsweek*, *Life Magazine*, National Public Radio, and others); by presenting the work of the Collaboration at important national forums (e.g., testimony before the U. S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families; at the 1985 national conference on adolescent parenting convened by the Children's Defense Fund); and by including written descriptions of the

Collaboration in published documents targeted at different kinds of audiences (e.g., see Klinman, Sander, Rosen & Longo, 1984; Klinman, 1985).

In its role as documentor of the Collaboration, Bank Street designed and implemented an extensive plan of data collection and analysis (described in detail in Chapter Three of this report). The documentation effort focused on three major sets of questions. First, what are the organizational strategies that most successfully overcome the barriers associated with outreach and service to young fathers and fathers-to-be? Secondly, who are the young men most likely to participate in, and benefit from, service programs? Finally, what programmatic effects result from their participation? Overall, the major objective of this documentation was to formulate guidelines for assisting adolescent fathers, their partners, and their children in a variety of communities throughout the country.

Funding Partners. The Teen Father Collaboration represented an unusual funding partnership. The Ford Foundation supported the process of documentation and networking across all program sites, provided leadership in the collaborative effort, and played an important role in focusing national-level public attention on the needs of both young parents in adolescent childbearing.

Eight community foundations (see Table 1) provided seed money and operating funds for the development of service programs within their own communities. Each community foundation played a major public advocacy role as well, encouraging the interest and support of other key resource people within its community. Thanks to this advocacy, seven Collaboration programs are slated to continue to operate beyond the life of the two-year demonstration.

Local Service Programs. Eight local agencies, each with an established program of assistance to adolescent mothers, expanded their efforts to include young men and participate in the Teen Father Collaboration (see Table 2). These sites varied in several important ways. They served racially and ethnically diverse populations, reflecting the varying compositions of their local communities. They defined their service populations differently, most serving young men who were age 19 or younger, while a few included the somewhat older

Table 2
An Overview of the Eight Communities Participating in the Teen Father Collaboration

State	City	Community Foundation	Service Provider	Setting	Race and Ethnicity of Teen Fathers Served
California	San Francisco	San Francisco Foundation	Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Project of the Family Service Agency of S.F.	School	primarily black and Hispanic
Connecticut	Bridgeport	Bridgeport Area Foundation	YMCA of Greater Bridgeport	Social Service Agency	primarily Hispanic
Kentucky	Louisville	Louisville Foundation	Teenage Parent Program of the Jefferson County Public Sch	School	primarily white
Minnesota	Minneapolis	Minneapolis Foundation	Division of Indian Work	Social Service Agency	primarily American Indian
Minnesota	St. Paul	Saint Paul Foundation	Face to Face Health and Counseling Service, Inc.	Social Service Agency	primarily white
New York	Poughkeepsie	Area Fund of Dutchess County	YWCA of Dutchess County	Social Service Agency	primarily white and black
Oregon	Portland	Oregon Community Foundation	National Council of Jewish Women Insights	Social Service Agency	primarily white
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	Philadelphia Foundation	The Medical College of PA Hospital	Hospital	primarily black

partners of adolescent mothers as well. Agencies were housed in different types of settings: hospitals, schools, and social service agencies. A few had relatively large staffs, but several relied on the efforts of just one or two people. Depending on their resources and staffing, some targeted a small number of teen fathers each year, while others were able to serve many more. Some offered most of their services on-site, others functioned principally as referral centers, helping young fathers connect with service providers elsewhere in the community.

What all eight sites had in common at the outset of the Collaboration was their commitment in reaching out to a previously neglected population and their creativity in designing a comprehensive range of services to meet the teen father's many needs. Typically, their programs included the following components: parenting skills classes, vocational skills training and job placement, educational programs, several modes of counseling, and family planning services. Each local program site is described in some detail in Appendix A of this report.

CHAPTER THREE

The Documentation Process: An Overview

Introduction

Bank Street College served as documentor of all aspects of the Teen Father Collaboration, designing and implementing an extensive agenda of process and outcome inquiry which focused on three major sets of questions. First, what are the organizational strategies that most successfully overcome the barriers associated with outreach and service to young fathers and fathers-to-be? Secondly, who are the young men who are most likely to participate in and benefit from service programs? Finally, what programmatic effects result from their participation?

Given the organizational diversity among the eight local program sites, their geographical dispersion, and the essentially pioneering nature of their efforts to work with the long-neglected male partner in adolescent pregnancy and parenting, the task of assessing both the development and the impact of the Collaboration was quite complex. From the outset, discovering answers to process questions—e.g.,what kinds of organizational commitment facilitated program development, or which staff characteristics offered the best "fit" in attracting male clients--was as important as collecting indices of programmatic outcome. The findings from this effort are also complex and rich in detail. They offer much practical information to service providers, and suggest many new directions for further research. Overall, the major objective of the documentation process was to formulate models and guidelines for assisting adolescent fathers, their partners, and their children in a variety of settings across the country.

What follows is an overview of all aspects of the data collection procedures, and a discussion of the limitations inherent in the documentation process.

Data Collection

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected throughout the two years of the Collaboration. Table 3 presents an overview of all data collection tasks.

Table 3

Overview of Data Collection Tasks

Data Collection Task	Responsibility	Schedule
1. Characteristics, resources and operations of agency	Agency administrator	Start of project
2. Summary of agency services	Program administrator	Quarterly
3. Prescheduled telephone interviews	Bank Street and program staff	As needed
4. Site visits	Bank Street staff	Annually
5. Background information on participants	Program staff	Participant's initial visit
6. Baseline information on participants	Program staff	Participant's subsequent (usually second) visit
7. Ongoing logs on participants	Program staff	Quarterly
8. Outcome data on participants	Program staff	Participant's exit from program

The responsibility for data collection was shared by Bank Street staff and program staff at the eight local sites. Typically, the same site person who worked directly to provide services to male clients also kept all relevant records. While Bank Street staff collected most of the data concerning the process of program development at the sites, local staff members--after being trained by Bank Street--collected the bulk of the data describing the young men who participated in their programs of service. All data were ultimately forwarded to Bank Street for purposes of data analysis and report preparation.

Process and implementation issues were the focus of four sets of data. These data described the organizational participants, the steps they took to develop and maintain programs of service for male clients, and the obstacles and successes they encountered.

1) Characteristics, Resources, and Operation of Agency was a form completed by an administrator at each of the eight local sites at the beginning of the Collaboration. This form was used to record information on organizational structure, agency size, staffing patterns, local client populations, range of services, history of service to adolescent parents, and other relevant aspects of agency operations.

2) A Quarterly Summary of Agency Services was completed by agency staff four times a year throughout the duration of the Collaboration. This form detailed activities on the recruitment of teen fathers and fathers-to-be, client referrals, direct provision of services, staff assignments, community development activities, external contacts related to the Collaboration, and related items.

3) Pre-scheduled Telephone Interviews were conducted between Bank Street and agency staff during the first year of the Collaboration. In advance of these interviews, questionnaires were distributed to project directors so that they--and other relevant project staff--would be prepared to discuss issues pertinent to the documentation process, including problems and solutions related to recruiting and serving teen fathers, staff attitudes, and community involvement. These interviews tended to catalyze efforts and raise important issues at each local site.

4) Annual Site Visits to agencies and community foundations were conducted by teams of Bank Street staff. Interviews were held with service delivery staff, administrators, and data collectors to garner varied perceptions of each local program, its relationship to the larger service community and to the Collaboration as a whole. Bank Street staff also observed services in action in order to gain first-hand knowledge of their physical setting, content, attendance and mode of delivery. In addition they interviewed a

small sample of young men at each site. Bank Street staff also interviewed representatives of each community foundation to explore the relationship between the agency and its sponsoring foundation, and the impact on the foundation of its participation in a national collaboration. With the permission of all interviewees, sessions were tape recorded for later transcription and content analysis.

Five additional sets of data focused on the young fathers and fathers-to-be who participated in Collaboration services.

1) A Background Information form was administered by local agency staff to all young men who made initial contact with their program of service. The form included a number of descriptive variables, including: age, ethnicity, religious background, reasons for making contact with a Collaboration service program, living arrangements, sources of financial support, educational and job status, relationship with partner, relationship with child (or expected child), and financial or in-kind contributions (or expectations to contribute) to the child.

2) A Baseline Data form was administered to all young men who, in the judgement of on-site program staff, indicated a clear intent to participate in services on a fairly regular basis. This form, administered by an agency staff member soon after the male client expressed his intention to pursue available services, was designed to assess these variables such as naturally occurring support networks, knowledge about reproduction and methods of birth control, and use of contraception.

3) An Ongoing Log recorded each participant's attendance and progress, on a quarterly basis, throughout his involvement in a program of service. This record was kept by an agency staff person who knew about the client's progress in some detail. It contributed richness and depth to the assessment of individual progress, and was therefore a useful tracking tool for on-site service providers. It also enabled Bank Street to track certain outcome measures for the sample as a whole, including: duration of participation in services, types of services most frequently attended, and changes in educational and employment status.

4) On-site Interviews with teen fathers and fathers-to-be were conducted by Bank Street during annual site visits to each agency in the Collaboration. These interviews explored systematically such issues as the young man's relationship with his partner and child, his concerns about their well-being and his own, and his hopes for the future. The interviews, which were lengthy, also permitted an in-depth look at programmatic strengths and weaknesses as articulated by a selected sub-sample of program participants. Interview data provided a much-needed source of first-hand information about young fathers and the issues they confronted in becoming parents so early in their lives.

5) An Outcome Data form was designed for administration by an agency staff person to each teen father when his involvement in the agency program was coming to an end. This form paralleled the Baseline Data form and selected items in the Background Information form to facilitate the measurement of change over time.

Limitations of the Documentation Process

The documentation effort was designed to be comprehensive, enabling the collection of process and outcome data from multiple sources throughout the two years of the Teen Father Collaboration. The goals of this process were: to discover how best to reach and serve young fathers and fathers-to-be; to describe the young men who participated in available services; to assess programmatic impact in their lives; and to generate models and guidelines for assisting young fathers, their partners, and their children in communities throughout the country.

The remaining chapters of this report are devoted to reporting what the Collaboration learned, and the relevance of these lessons to others who work with and study adolescent parents. Therefore, it is important to indicate several limitations inherent in the documention process that may affect the generalizability of the Collaboration's findings.

First, it must be emphasized that the Teen Father Collaboration was--in the truest sense--an exploration of possibilities. At the time of its inception, there existed little information to guide program development or to help focus the documentation effort. Local program sites were not expected to implement and field-test one particular "model" of service delivery. Rather, each community struggled to understand and then meet the needs of its own local population of adolescent fathers. Staff were encouraged to try out new ideas and refine program strategies based on their own clinical judgments and their considerable expertise as service providers. While this contributed greatly to the dynamic nature of the collaborative network, it also made it difficult to pinpoint the ways in which programmatic components affected the young fathers. For example what was called "parenting skills training" varied along several dimensions--content, duration, mode of delivery, characteristics of instructional staff as well as across program sites, and over time.

Secondly, the young men who took advantage of Collaboration programs of service were entirely self-selected. It is therefore difficult to know very much about the hundreds of young men in each Collaboration community who were eligible for services but who did not take advantage of them. Perhaps the greatest single concern expressed by staff members at each local program site at the outset of the Collaboration was that teenage fathers--stereotyped as unconcerned about their partners and their children--would simply not come into their agency for services, no matter how well-tailored such services might be to the needs of young men. Therefore, when painstaking outreach efforts began to pay off, and young fathers and fathers-to-be did start to show up at local program sites, no attempt was made to assign them systematically to different kinds of service components, or to deny them services in order to fill slots in a comparison group comprised of young men who wanted services but did not receive them. It is also difficult to know what changes in participants' lives are directly attributable to their having received Collaboration services, and what changes occurred for other reasons.

This difficulty in interpreting impact data is compounded by the high rate of program attrition among participants. Very few young men, once they had received the services they needed, indicated that they intended to leave the Collaboration, so agency staff were rarely able to collect outcome data in advance of their departure. Furthermore, the population was geographically mobile and often impossible to contact by telephone or by mail and since data collection resources were limited, outcome data forms were not distributed to the majority of young men. Instead, program effects had to be assessed using the progress reports which agency staff routinely prepared to describe their entire clientele of young fathers.

In spite of these limitations, careful documentation of this pioneering exploration in both service delivery and systematic data collection has yielded a wide range of preliminary findings and a rich source of hypotheses for further experimentation. These are contained in the following chapters of this report.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Development of the Collaboration: Problems and Their Solutions

This chapter focuses on a variety of developmental tasks and implementation issues as they unfolded throughout the two years of the Teen Father Collaboration. It draws on multiple sources of data, described in Chapter Two. The discussion in this chapter represents the combined perspective of all eight local program sites, as distilled and integrated by Bank Street in its role as documentor of the Collaboration. In other words, common threads of experience are emphasized rather than the singular experience of any one program site. In this way, the most widely useful lessons learned by many dedicated, innovative professionals in eight different communities are synthesized.

Year One of the Collaboration

During the first full year of the Teen Father Collaboration, each of the eight local program sites was faced with a myriad of developmental tasks: articulating overall program goals, resolving a variety of staffing issues, establishing outreach strategies to attract male clients, developing a trial roster of services for male clients, building an active network as participants in a major collaborative effort, and collecting data important to the documentation process.

Articulating Program Goals. Recognizing that most of the agencies in the Collaboration had a history of working with teen mothers but not teen fathers, it was clear that all organizational participants needed to give consideration to their goals in relation to reaching and serving young males.

The one goal most commonly articulated was to help young men become good parents--to provide them with the skills they needed to become competent and enthusiastic nurturers. Various agency staff put it like this:

> The ultimate goal as I see it is to have a young man connect with his child and to involve him in the child-rearing process.

> It's extremely important to help young males reach the point that they can see themselves as nurturing parents, so that they want to spend time with their child.
>
> We want to help young men get something from our program that enables them to realize the potential of the relationship with their child.

In conjunction with this overriding goal, staff were aware that most of the young men wanted very much to assist in supporting their child, but often did not have the job skills or the employment opportunities they needed. Therefore, helping their male clients achieve work-related goals was another priority among agency staff.

> It's important for these guys to work on job skills. This is a big factor in their self esteem.
>
> We want to get them off the street corners, out of the bars and into the mainstream of life...hooked up to a more productive way of life.

A related goal was to help young men complete their schooling since many staff members saw this as a pre-requisite to opportunities in the labor market.

> I am concerned about seeing lots of guys who are really committed to their children, who just drop out of school and take dead end jobs--so that they can support them right now--without seeing the long term consequences. It's important for these young men to finish their educations and to get into good job training programs which will prepare them for work that is more satisfying than many of the menial jobs they end up having.

Early on, it became apparent to many agency staff members that many young men experienced interpersonal difficulties with their partners.

Violence, drinking, and abuse occurred, often as a result of the frustrations these young couples faced. Several staff members saw part of their goal as helping these young people develop skills for talking problems out and improving the quality of their relationship. Legal issues also surfaced as an area in which staff wanted to take an active stand. Paternity adjudication and problems of violence that landed young men in court or prison often turned staff members into advocates for their teen father clients.

A final goal that several program staff mentioned at the outset of working with male clients was instructing them in responsible sexuality, often including the use of contraception. They wanted to convey the message that both young partners must be involved in preventing unwanted pregnancies.

Frequently, agency goals were broad-based and inclusive, touching on a variety of the issues discussed above. As one staff member put it:

> We'd like these young men to be nurturing fathers, have jobs, finish their schooling--and feel good about themselves.

Dealing With Staffing Issues. By far the most common and difficult staffing issue was having only one hands-on person to reach and serve an agency's entire clientele of teen fathers and fathers-to-be. This person had to have a panoply of skills, including outreach, counseling, networking, public education and data collection. One administrator said that these workers required a combination of "street savvy and professional skills," a mix that was often hard to find.

The frustration engendered by this limitation in staff size, coupled with the great amount of work necessary to run the programs successfully, was felt by almost everyone.

> I feel as though there could be additional staff for the implementation of the program, especially in terms of recruitment. It's too much for me to do alone.

> More staff would help me to see the increasing number of teen dads who are starting to come in for services.
>
> I can work with the dads. But in terms of numbers, I am going to have to cut back, do some brainstorming for more volunteers who I can refer dads to.

With supervision from their administrators, and encouragement and technical assistance from Bank Street staff, hands-on workers honed the skills they already had and developed new ones. They also adjusted their expectations about the numbers of teen fathers they could realistically serve, devising creative strategies to supplement their own efforts: recruiting volunteers, using peer counselors, running support groups in which several teen fathers could be worked with simultaneously, and referring teen fathers to other resource organizations in their communities.

In several agencies, the importance of staff development emerged as another issue. In some settings, an all-out campaign had to be waged in order to win the interest and cooperation of staff members who were working with and committed to the well-being of teenage mothers, but who were not particularly receptive to the idea of including their male partners in services.

> We've come a long way with staff attitudes, but I'm still unhappy with them. There are many people on staff who are strong feminists and still feel that the females or the teen mothers basically are the ones who should be getting the help and the funds.
>
> This agency could be more receptive to men. It could redo the intake procedure used when pregnant teens come in so as to allow the young man validation as a partner.
>
> There are other staff members working with these kids who are not part of the Collaboration. They need further staff development. They need intellectual understanding of these kids' plight. We should have classes with the nurses who

> do prenatal classes. A lot of the staff needs systematic presentations to understand why it's important to include the young men.

A staffing issue of another kind revolved around the personal identification of the hands-on person with the young male clients. Several counselors stated that they had "been there"--dealing with the same issues, working through the same problems--themselves. Many therefore stressed the necessity of having male staff to work with young men "providing role models to them," especially given the dearth of older men in these adolescents' lives. While in some communities females worked well with male clients, and a few male staffers were unable to relate successfully to their teen father clients, it should be noted that hands-on workers, program administrators and young fathers themselves stressed the importance of male staff to the success of the teen father programs.

Establishing Recruitment Strategies and Community Linkages. At the outset of the Teen Father Collaboration, one of the main concerns expressed by agency staff was not knowing how or where to reach teenage fathers. Since most of the agencies were already serving teen mothers, one likely strategy involved reaching out to their male partners. Young women, therefore, were informed about the addition of new services and were asked to invite their partners to participate. Many did with great enthusiasm, and even "constant nagging," until their partners joined the program.

Although teen mothers provided the single most effective way of reaching young men, a combination of other strategies also worked well. Outreach workers who were particularly adept at going into their communities frequented teenage hang-outs: recreational centers, pool halls, local bars, basketball courts, and street corners. Many put up posters and gave out fliers, and some even had tee-shirts made--all to advertise their programs.

Hands-on staff also made contacts with school counselors and gave talks at near-by schools. Similar contacts were made at local hospitals, pre-natal clinics and churches, alerting staff in those organizations in order to get referrals.

The media were tried as a further way of reaching young men. Many administrators and hands-on staff appeared on television shows, spoke on radio programs, and gave lengthy interviews to local newspapers. Bank Street staff did the same, arranging for important coverage about the Collaboration in many national newspapers and magazines. Teen fathers themselves appeared on television talk shows and were interviewed by local papers to spread the news about the programs.

Finally, word-of-mouth played an important role in reaching increasing numbers of fathers and fathers-to-be. Young men who knew they were being helped by receiving services told their friends to "check out" the programs. Many of these friends eventually joined.

Initially, many Collaboration staff members were frustrated by the intense recruitment efforts required in order to attract male clients:

> Teen mothers have come in for two solid years. But opening the doors to teen males has not meant they come in. We have to go out there and get them.

But as more teen fathers began to make real use of their services, and news got around about their programs, most of the hands-on staff found that they had more clients than they could handle. Ironically, as this first year of the Collaboration progressed, the problem became having too few staff members to work with the increasing numbers of teen fathers who wanted and needed services.

Developing an Initial Roster of Services. It was necessary to make an early assessment of the services most likely to be important for the teen father population. The roster of services typically identified by organizations in the Collaboration included: vocational skills training, job placement, parenting skills instruction, pre-natal classes, various modes of counseling, family planning information, General Equivalency Diploma (G.E.D.) classes and advocacy work. A unique grandparents group was offered in one organization. It should be noted that this roster of services represents a composite of all eight local programs, and that none of the programs tried to initiate this full complement of services all at once.

All agencies, from the beginning, did focus on vocational skills training and job placement services, since the ability to make financial contributions to their children was often uppermost in the minds of the young men they served. Some agencies provided job skills training on the premises, coaching their clients in resume writing, assessing want ads, role playing interviews with potential employers, and educating them about the etiquette of job seeking. Other agencies concentrated on building linkages with established vocational training programs in their communities so they would accept young fathers as trainees and try to place them in jobs.

Each of the agencies also offered parenting skills classes to teach childcare skills, to foster closeness between the young fathers and their children, and to promote group support among young men in the throes of early parenthood. These classes taught the rudiments of childcare: feeding, bathing, diapering and playing with young children. Most, however, went beyond these activities and dealt with the stages of early childhood development, conveying a sense of what young children could and could not do, and what they needed from their fathers. This helped eliminate punitive responses by young fathers who often felt frustrated because they expected too much from their babies.

For fathers-to-be, some agencies offered the opportunity for pre-natal involvement, inviting fathers to listen to the heartbeat of their unborn children, participate in labor classes, and even attend the birth of their babies. The young men were also given information about the nutritional needs of their pregnant partners so that they could take an active and practical role during this important time, thereby helping to ensure a healthy pregnancy outcome.

A variety of counseling modes were made available to the young fathers and prospective fathers. Depending on the counselor's own comfort and skill, some gave individual counseling, others led support groups, and still others conducted couples counseling. A number of hands-on staff made several different types of counseling available to their clients, recognizing that these young men benefitted from talking about their own worries as much as they did from hearing from others who were "in the same boat." It should be noted that a great deal of the individual and couples counseling that occurred happened during home visits, a strategy that proved invaluable in building the trust young parents felt toward the staff of the teen father programs.

Other service components included family planning education, and assistance in completing high school diploma requirements. Legal advocacy work was also done by a number of hands-on staff and resulted in, among other outcomes, the establishment of paternity by some of these young men.

Agencies initiated services slowly during the first year of the Collaboration, adding new ones as time passed and the numbers and needs of teen fathers warranted them. The key to building a full program was the initiative and creativity of the staff and the commitment of sufficient organizational resources to achieve the goal of establishing a comprehensive program for male clients.

Networking and Information Sharing Within the Collaboration. The challenge of building a truly collaborative network across all eight sites required each agency to know how the others were faring. How were they reaching male clients? What kinds of services were they offering? What problems were they encountering, and what solutions had they discovered? Several communication vehicles were put into place; some promoted direct contact among the local sites, others mediated this contact through Bank Street College.

One important means of communication involved regular telephone networking around a variety of issues: successful recruiting strategies, modes of service delivery, data collection, dealing with the media, staff overload, obstacles met in carrying out programs and so forth. As often as possible, creative ideas generated at one site were passed on to other agencies that were encountering similar kind of issues.

A great deal of information was also communicated through a tri-annual Collaboration newsletter, Update, written jointly by Bank Street and Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. Distributed to all partners in the collaborative effort, these newsletters were organized with extensive input from the local sites. Each issue during this first year addressed topics which local staff people asked to learn more about, including start-up issues, overcoming obstacles to service delivery, and descriptions of successful program components.

Perhaps the most exciting vehicle for building the collaborative network was the annual Teen Parenthood Collaboration Conference. The first conference was held in New York City, in June, 1983. At this conference, agency representatives had the opportunity to present a description of their program of services, reviewing successes as well as snags. Since serving teen fathers was new to all the agencies, mutual support and morale-building were crucial. At the time of the conference, all of the agencies had met obstacles in recruiting young men, and most were dealing with a shared disappointment in the apparent reluctance of teen fathers to enter social service agencies--especially as compared with young mothers. Practical concerns surfaced and many helpful suggestions emerged as participants discussed how they were tackling issues in their own agencies.

Data collection issues also took a prominent place in the conference, and care was given to reviewing the data forms so that agency staff would know how to administer them. Overall, the importance of meeting and talking together at this initial conference cannot be understated. Bank Street staff were told numerous times how important the conference was in solidifying the spirit of the Collaboration, in "giving faces to names," and in assisting the agencies with the concrete tasks that lay before them.

Confronting Early Data Collection Issues. Since the purpose of the Teen Father Collaboration was not only to provide services to teen fathers but to document the process of that endeavor as well, each local program site had to become involved in the extensive process of data collection. From the beginning, the effort involved in keeping accurate records about the teen fathers they served generated a variety of responses: some positive, some skeptical, some disgruntled.

Some staff members were eager to collect data about the population they served, feeling this concretized their work and made them more aware of how much they were doing for their clients and how much they were discovering about them.

> Somehow, collecting data about what I do makes me take my work more seriously. I enjoy seeing what I've done on paper.

Others were pleased because they could use the data they collected to demonstrate the importance of their work in meetings with potential funders. In addition, several hands-on staff mentioned that they used the data collection forms as tools to help them assess the needs of individual teen father clients and then set up appropriate "plans for action."

According to a number of staff workers, the young fathers themselves often enjoyed being asked questions. They liked the attention, the fact that the interviewer wanted to know more about their lives, and even took the time to write this information down. Conversely, some staff reported that certain adolescents were put off by the questions asked during their first visit to the agency.

> There is no way to give a young man enough 'goodies' in exchange for asking him so many questions on his initial visit.

Other young men seemed embarrassed by certain kinds of questions (e.g., about their sexual behavior). However, reports of such problems diminished as the counselors became more confident interviewers over time. Certainly, the way in which questions were asked, and the timing of the interviews in relation to the bonds of trust being built between staff members and their clients, were important in ensuring the success of the data collection effort.

By far, the most consistently expressed concern about the data collection process was how to balance its demands against the amount of time needed for service delivery. Because program staffing was generally limited to one fulltime person, there were few practical solutions to this problem. In the end, many hands-on staff had to limit the number of male clients they could realistically work with—an unsettling solution for service providers whose major interest and orientation was in serving clients, not in collecting data.

The data collection process also involved the cooperation of local program staff during intensive site visits made by Bank Street staff teams. These visits were extremely valuable for Bank Street and were generally met with favorable reactions from program staff, who offered these comments:

> It's important to begin to share what's emerging in other places. What's exciting is that we are part of something big and we can use these visits to learn from others.
>
> Bank Street needs these visits to coordinate the Collaboration, to see what's going on. You get from us a sense of what and how we are doing. We could never tell you everything that's going on without them.

Site visits had many purposes. As described more fully in Chapter Two, Bank Street staff gave technical assistance to agency personnel--observed services in action, interviewed staff members, foundation personnel, and teen father participants--formally and at length. In this way, Bank street staff obtained insights into the way each community was beginning to reach and serve teen fathers. In addition, these visits gave Bank Street an understanding of the richness of these programs as well as an awareness of the plight of the young men they served. The base for trust and communication were formed during this first round of visits, and became a hallmark of these meetings.

Year Two of the Collaboration

Building on the many lessons of their first year of operation, organizational participants in the Teen Father Collaboration entered Year Two with a great deal of information to sift through. The challenge of this second year was to make decisions about what was most effective--and to stop investing time and resources in other less promising directions--by refining recruitment strategies, expanding service delivery components, improving communication within the collaboration network, resolving data collection issues, and devising strategies for continuing successful programs beyond the life of the Collaboration itself.

Refining Recruitment Strategies. During the first year of the Collaboration, outreach efforts were characterized by a great deal of trial and error. By the second year, however, hands-on staff and program administrators were able to describe with considerable confidence those recruitment strategies that worked best. Across all eight communities, there was substantial agreement about the usefulness of the following list of tactics.

1) Informing teen mothers or prospective mothers about services for their partners was identified as the single most productive way to recruit male adolescents. Young women were contacted in pre-natal clinics, in hospitals after they gave birth, and in the alternative schools some of them attended. At the Insights Project, in Portland, Oregon, for instance, agency staff typically visited a young woman in the hospital during the early postpartum period, giving her a gift for her newborn. Informing her about the availability of services for herself and her partner, she was asked the name of her partner so that he could be contacted directly about the Collaboration. At the Medical College of Pennsylvania Hospital, in Philadelphia, the hands-on staff person made weekly presentations to a group of young mothers-to-be at the hospital's pre-natal clinic. In addition, whenever a male partner came into the hospital with a young mother, a social worker alerted the staff member of the Teen Father Collaboration who, "on the spot," spoke to him about the services available to him. This immediate, in-person contact was crucial in forming a connection both to the staff member and to the program. At the T.A.P.P. project in San Francisco, young female clients were told about the father's program and then asked the name and age of their partners. Either a peer counselor, the community outreach worker or a counseling staff member contacted each young man who was identified in this way. In the TAPP project in Louisville, young men were reached through their female partners who attended the site's school for pregnant teenagers. At other program sites, details varied but the scenario was similar: young women who were willing to identify

their partners proved to be an excellent "starting point" for the recruitment of teen fathers and fathers-to-be.

2) Outreach workers were also extremely effective at a number of sites. At the Medical College of Pennsylvania Hospital, for example, social workers visited community-based health clinics to identify young fathers. At both the YMCA in Bridgeport, Connecticut and the T.A.P.P. Fatherhood Project in San Francisco, male staff with well-honed "street skills" made contact with prospective clients at local hang-outs: basketball courts, pool rooms, recreational centers, and street corners. In Louisville, at TAPP, the male outreach worker made many contacts with young fathers through his work in the juvenile justice system. All of these contacts were designed to make large numbers of young men aware that they could find practical assistance if they faced problems in their new role as parents or parents-to-be.

3) Other staff members within the agency--those who worked with young mothers but were not part of the Collaboration--were also important in the recruiting process. Social workers in the pediatric and pre-natal clinics at the hospital in Philadelphia, for example, frequently referred young men to the teen father program. Similarly, continuous case workers at T.A.P.P. in San Francisco made many referrals to colleagues who staffed that agency's teen father program. This kind of assistance was typical of any agency large enough to have certain staff members working only with teen mothers and others who worked only with teen fathers.

4) Staff working at other youth-serving agencies in the community also became excellent sources for referrals, especially as Collaboration programs became better known. In Portland, for example, public health nurses and staff members from an array of youth service centers were instrumental in the recruiting process. In San Francisco, high school counselors who had heard presentations given by the T.A.P.P. staff made many referrals. At the Division of Indian Work in Minneapolis, staff members at other agencies serving the American Indian community frequently knew about and referred young fathers to the D.I.W. program.

5) The media proved to be an indirect source of clients. Although most staff members at the sites felt that young men did not hear public service announcements urging them to join Collaboration service programs, staff at other agencies in the community did learn about the teen father projects through the newspapers, radio, and television, and then referred young men to various Collaboration sites.

Refining Service Delivery Components. After a year of offering an array of services to young fathers and fathers-to-be, some services emerged as crucial in helping young men deal constructively with their lives as adolescents, as parents or prospective parents, and as partners. Like the recruiting strategies described above, the service delivery components underwent a process of refinement. The following is a composite list of service components that both administrators and hands-on staff at all eight sites described as essential to the success of their programs.

1) Counseling was deemed extremely important by staff members at all program sites. Counselors took a variety of approaches:

a) Frequently, the need for structured individual counseling which addressed specific topics was emphasized (e.g., the young man's use of contraception, the importance to him of spending time with his child, his relationship with his partner, whether or not to establish legal paternity, how to handle household finances).

> You have to bring up particular issues. If you just say, 'How are things going?' you might not hear anything. It's important to say, for example: 'Let's talk about your relationship to your child today.'
>
> Strategies or plans of action have to be set up in this kind of counseling. We set up short term goals in order to reach the long term goals. If you don't have goals--educational, vocational, and personal ones--you'll lose them.

b) *Group or peer counseling* was invaluable as a way of offering a number of young men support, information, and the overall sense that they were not alone in their plight. Leaders facilitated the participation of all group members, encouraging them to discuss their individual problems--and discover the similarities in the situations they confronted. The groups were of primary importance in reducing the isolation of these young men and in demonstrating to the young men that, as one young father stated, "others are in the same boat." They were also an effective way for one staff worker to assist several clients simultaneously.

c) *Couples counseling* was offered at several sites. Partners either came into the agency together or were seen in their own homes. Issues of child abuse, domestic violence, and the relationship between the couple were discussed. These sessions were sometimes facilitated by a male and female team. Given the volatility of many adolescent relationships, couples counseling helped bring a modicum of equilibrium into the lives of these stressed young parents.

2) *Job related services* were available at every site because the problem that teen fathers spoke most vociferously about was their need to provide financial support for their children. In some settings, teen fathers could be referred to well-established vocational training agencies that had cooperative relationships with Collaboration sites: these included the Private Industry Council in Bridgeport, CORPP in Philadelphia, and the Vocational Unit of the Boy Scouts in Louisville. At other sites--San Francisco, Poughkeepsie, St. Paul, and Minneapolis--vocational services were provided by a staff member at the agency itself. The content and duration of the job-related services varied across sites, although they all included instruction in resume writing, scanning the want ads, and developing interviewing skills. When possible, job placements were included in the vocational programs, as well as "shadowing" opportunities and on-site vocational training.

3) *Educational services* were seen as a way to improve young men's prospects for better and less menial jobs. Agency staff referred many teen fathers or prospective fathers who were school drop-outs to local high school equivalency (GED) programs; others were encouraged to return

to school. For those who were still in school but who were contemplating dropping out so they could find work, hands-on staff generally encouraged staying in school, often meeting or speaking with the high school counselor about the young man's situation.

There was, however, one group of teenage fathers for whom very little could be done by way of educational service provision. These were male teen clients who needed to be referred to pre-GED training because they could not meet the requirements for GED training. Their basic skills were so poor that many were reading on a third grade level. Unfortunately, in many cities there were no programmatic alternatives for assisting these young men, especially since C.E.T.A. programs had been cut. This situation reveals a serious gap in the provision of services and one that needs to be addressed by local communities, state and federal funding sources.

4) Parenting skills classes were important to many young men who spoke openly of their anxieties about how best to raise their children and their desire to be more involved in their child's life. In parenting skills classes, Collaboration staff, nurses and/or physicians taught the rudiments of child development and child care: how to diaper, feed, bathe and hold an infant as well as instruction in age-appropriate behavior of children. Parenting skills instruction was sometimes given to young couples in their homes, as at the Insights program in Portland. The Division of Indian Work in Minneapolis, the programs in Louisville and San Francisco, and the Medical College of Pennsylvania Hospital all had on-site groups. Fathers brought their babies with them, shared their experiences, and learned what to expect as their children grew--which was extremely important in reducing the frustration and anger these young men sometimes experienced when their babies cried or seemed inconsolable. Overall, the parenting classes were crucial in strengthening important early father-child ties and in increasing both the teen father's sense of responsibility to and his enjoyment of his baby.

Improving Communication and Information Sharing. The networking and information sharing that began during Year One continued throughout the second year of the Collaboration. Technical assistance via the telephone and the mail, the newsletter, Update, and the second annual Collaboration conference all helped to foster the networking process. Lessons from Year One were instrumental in improving all three of these communication vehicles.

Agencies received fiscal support from Bank Street to foster increased telephone contact. "Mini-networks" based on geographical proximity arose: for example, Portland and San Francisco staff talked frequently, as did staff from Philadelphia, Louisville, and Bridgeport. The process of collaborating was extremely important to staff at all eight program sites. Many staff members commented on the uniqueness of the collaborative effort:

> This Collaboration has given us a perspective on ourselves. It has helped us appreciate how good we are--how much we're doing. Hearing others' experiences and sharing information has been very important. It has been very helpful not to feel so isolated as one agency, but to know that we're a part of something more than just ourselves.
>
> I think team approaches are much better than isolated ones. When you can get seven or eight programs in the country doing something, I think it lends itself to more kinds of validities. You're sharing more, learning more from each other. More information comes out of it.
>
> For the staff and for myself it was invaluable getting together with people outside of this community. We've gotten all kinds of ideas from the Collaboration about how to do things and what services to offer.

Update, the Collaboration newsletter, continued to address topics of interest to the local program sites, and it tackled some new issues during its second year of publication: for example, paternity adjudication, employability, and the prospects for program continuation beyond the life of the Collaboration.

The second annual Collaboration conference was held in San Francisco in June, 1984. A variety of formats enhanced communication and networking--among program staff members as well as members of the funding partnership which supported the Collaboration. Perhaps the highlight of this conference was the presentation of preliminary findings from the first full year of operation and data collection. Bank Street staff presented systematic analyses of 245 young fathers and fathers-to-be who made contact with one of the Collaboration's eight service delivery sites during Year One, supplemented by interview data derived from a sub-sample of 18 teen fathers selected by staff at each local site (Rosen & Sander, 1984).

Presentation of these preliminary findings was important in a number of ways. Site staff had spent numerous hours collecting data. This was the first occasion for Bank Street to share some of their data with them--data that came from their efforts to reach and serve young fathers. Their work was "held up to them," giving them the opportunity to see its importance and motivating them to continue their efforts. When they returned to their sites, they felt even more keenly the significance of their work with teen fathers and the need to collect data to describe what they were doing.

Presentation of the Collaboration's preliminary findings also generated great interest among community foundation representatives and participants in Project Redirection. It stimulated much fruitful dialogue and highlighted the importance of serving females and males who were confronting adolescent parenthood.

Resolving Data Collection Issues. During the second year of the Collaboration, many idiosyncratic problems about data collection were resolved. Resistance by site staff members to asking specific questions on the data forms was largely overcome. Increased confidence and experience on the part of the hands-on staff and the administrators in the Collaboration, plus the excitement generated by the presentation of the preliminary findings, led to a more positive attitude in collecting data. Information derived from completed forms continued to be useful as a tool for refining needs assessments and fine-tuning strategies for service delivery.

One serious problem did remain in relation to data collection: the amount of time it required. Given the now substantial caseload of individual staff members, the need for aggressive and constant outreach, the time spent in counseling teen fathers, the referrals and home visits, work with the media, presentations in their local communities and so forth, data collection was sometimes perceived as an almost insuperable task. Not only did the collection result in long work hours (evenings and Saturdays were not uncommon), it also meant that staff had to limit the number of teen fathers they could work with in other ways.

Nonetheless, the positives of the documentation effort were still espoused strongly:

> Collecting data gives us another check on what we should be dealing with. It makes us think more about things like outreach and what services we've actually given the young man.
>
> The data help us get a composite on teen fathers, what their needs are, just who they are. When we go out to do presentations, we have more credibility.
>
> Collecting data keeps me from getting complacent. It provides accountability.

Data collection came to be seen as more of an integral part of the service delivery program, and both enhanced the ability for staff members to tailor their services to the young men's needs and to access their progress.

Institutionalizing Successful Programs in Their Local Communities

One important goal which operated from the outset of the Teen Father Collaboration was to ensure the continuation of successful local programs beyond the two years of the demonstration. Community-based funding partners, working with the staff members of their local teen father programs, were instrumental in meeting this goal. Bank Street Staff cooperated with each local community by dedicating a great deal of time during their final round of site visits to formal presentations at community fund-raising events. In addition, the accomplishments of the

Collaboration network enabled Bank Street to compete successfully for a three-year federal grant (from the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs) which continues and extends services for teen fathers, teen mothers and their families at five Collaboration program sites.

Taken together, a mix of public and private contributions at the federal, state and local levels will ensure the continuation of services to teenage fathers at seven of the Collaboration's original teen father sites: the National Council for Jewish Women INSIGHTS program in Portland, Oregon; the Teen Indian Parents Program at the Division of Indian Work in Minneapolis; the Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Project (T.A.P.P.) in San Francisco; the Teen Fathers Program headquartered at the Medical College of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia; the Teenage Parent Program (TAPP) of the Jefferson County Schools in Louisville, Kentucky; the Teen Father Program at the Y.W.C.A. of Dutchess County in Poughkeepsie, New York; and the Teen Fathers Program headquartered at the Y.M.C.A. of Greater Bridgeport, in Connecticut.

In Portland, services for young fathers and prospective fathers are slated to continue for an additional two years. The Oregon Community Foundation has not only made its own continuation grant, but has been instrumental in brokering additional support within the community. The United Way of Portland and OAPP funds will also contribute to the program's continuation. In Minneapolis, several funding agencies have made awards to enable the continuation of services to young Indian fathers, including: the United Way of Minneapolis, the Presbytery of the Twin Cities, the Sheltering Arms Foundation, the Ripley Foundation, and OAPP.

In San Francisco, a continuation grant from the San Francisco Foundation is already in place, and T.A.P.P. has applied for funding from the state-wide Adolescent Family Life Program as well. Additional funding has been earmarked by OAPP and the San Francisco Public Health Department. Continuation funding for the hospital-based Philadelphia program comes exclusively from private sources: the Philadephia Foundation has made a substantial third-year award, and additional monies will come from the Cassatt Foundation and the Dohlfinger-McMahon Foundation.

In Poughkeepsie, the Area Fund of Dutchess County has made a continuation award, and the United Way and the Dutchess Youth Bureau have become new funding partners. The Bridgeport site will continue its services to teenage fathers with resources from the Y.M.C.A. itself, OAPP, and the city's Human Resources Department. Additional sources of potential funding have also expressed interest, including the March of Dimes and church-affiliated groups.

Overall, this continuation of support for services to young fathers in seven collaboration cities is a testament both to the commitment made by local program staff in building successful programs, and to the dedication of the community foundations in their efforts to forge an array of new funding partnerships. Inquiries about how to build and support services to teenage fathers have already poured in from several hundred agencies in cities around the country; and the continuation of well-seasoned "veteran" programs affiliated with the Teen Father Collaboration bodes well for catalyzing even more interest in providing much needed assistance to the long-neglected male partner in adolescent parenthood.

CHAPTER FIVE

Teen Father: Exploring the Myths

This chapter describes in some detail the young men who contacted the eight local programs of service made available through the efforts of the Teen Father Collaboration at least once. It draws on multiple sources of quantitative and interview data, as described in Chapter Two. Throughout, where appropriate, quantitative data are supplemented by interview data in order to provide some of the relevant insights offered by the young men themselves as they discussed their lives as teenage fathers.

This chapter will first discuss the two-tiered strategy of data collection. Next, basic descriptive information about the teen fathers will be presented. Following this, four commonly held myths about teenage fathers will be noted, and the data from the participants of the Teen Father Collaboration which address each myth will be examined.

Data Collection

There was considerable variation in the number of teen fathers about whom data could be collected at each of the Collaboration's eight program sites--an inevitable result of differences in sites along such dimensions as organizational size, staffing, funding levels, and success in outreach to young fathers.

Despite these difficulties, Collaboration data describe the largest sample of adolescent fathers in the professional literature to date. Given the limitations of these data (see Chapter Three), appropriate caution should be exercised in generalizing from these findings to the larger population of all adolescent fathers. Nonetheless, Collaboration data contribute a great deal of new information about a largely unexamined population of young men. Prior to presenting the data, however, the two stages of data collection must be discussed.

Background Information

Over the course of two years, the Collaboration's eight program sites collected background information to describe a total of 395 adolescent fathers and fathers-to-be. Background information forms were administered by agency staff to all teen fathers who made at least one contact with their local programs.

Baseline Data

After making initial contact with one of the eight Collaboration sites, young men had the option of returning for services on a regular basis. Among those who did return, 204 cooperated in the completion of a second questionnaire, the Baseline Data form. Agency staff administered this as soon as they were reasonably certain that two conditions were being satisfied: first, that a young man had expressed explicit interest in returning for additional services; and secondly, that sufficient trust had been established to ensure that the young man would not be "scared off" by the personal nature of the questions contained in the data form (e.g., questions about sexuality). In other words, the priority at this point was service provision, not documentation. Typically, young men completed the Baseline Data form during their second contact with a Collaboration program, but the range was between one and eight episodes of contact. To test for selection bias, the background characteristics of the 204 young men who completed this second data form were statistically compared with those of the young men who did not (n=191); no significant differences were found.

The following section presents descriptive information of both the group who made one visit to their local programs and those who returned for further services. General information about their status as fathers is noted, along with age, ethnicity, educational and employment/financial status.

Basic Demographics

When they first made contact with Collaboration programs, the overwhelming majority of young men (90.1%) were first-time fathers or fathers-to-be. Slightly more were expectant fathers (54.7%) than fathers whose children had already been born (45.3%). Of the latter group, slightly more young men were fathers of sons (56%) than fathers of daughters (44%). There were, however, no systematic relationships between the sex of the child and any other measure of father-child involvement.

Exactly half of the sub-sample completing the Baseline data (n=204) were already fathers, and half were fathers-to-be. Among those whose children had already been born, fathers of sons and fathers of daughters were represented equally (51% and 49% respectively); in this group, the sex of his child has little influence on a young man's decision to participate in agency services.

The eight Collaboration program sites dealt primarily with young men between the ages of 15 and 19.5. The majority of young men who sought services were between 17 and 18 years old. These young men were from an ethnically diverse population: 37.7% were Black, 25.2% were White, 24% were Hispanic (10% Puerto Rican, 7% Mexican American, 7% other Hispanic), 7% were American Indian, and 5.1% were Asian American. Many of the young men were from Protestant backgrounds (43.7%). Over one-third (37.8%) were Catholic, 12.3% claimed no religious affiliation, and a small proportion of young men (6.2%) came from a range of other religious backgrounds, including Muslim, Rastofarian, and Mieng.

When asked about their living arrangements, a small percentage of young men (3.8%) reported living alone, while 18% said they lived only with their partner or with their partner and child. Many (29.8%) lived with their parent(s) (usually their mother), while the largest number (37.4%) said they lived in some kind of extended family arrangement (frequently including grandparents, siblings, aunts, and other relatives). Fewer than one in ten reported living with non-relatives (usually friends or their partner's family). Table 4 presents these findings in greater detail.

Education

As shown in Table 5, relatively few young fathers of any ethnicity (8.2%) reported leaving school before completing the ninth grade. However, drop-out rates increased thereafter, in a pattern similar to national data on school dropout among all young males (Rumberger, 1981): 14.3% left after completing ninth grade, 21.3% after tenth grade, and 23.5% after eleventh grade. Nearly one-third of the sample said they had completed high school or obtained a high school equivalency diploma.

Young men who left school early reported a variety of reasons for dropping out (Table 6). Just over 11% cited the need to leave school so they could support their partner and child; however, by far the most prevalent reasons for dropping out was simply "I didn't like school; I was bored."

Most young men were not currently enrolled in any type of school program (74.2%). Ethnic background was significantly related to school

Table 4

Participants' Living Arrangements

Living With	Participants	
	n	%
Self	14	(3.8)
Partner	39	(10.5)
Partner and Child	28	(7.5)
Parent(s)	83	(22.3)
Parent(s) and partner	15	(4.0)
Parent(s), partner, child	13	(3.5)
Extended family	110	(29.6)
Extended family and partner	19	(5.1)
Extended family, partner, child	10	(2.7)
Non-relatives and partner	22	(5.9)
Non-relatives and child	11	(3.0)
Other	8	(2.2)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 372.

Table 5

Highest Grade Completed by Participants Not Enrolled in School

Grade Level	Participants	
	n	%
5	1	(0.4)
6	3	(1.3)
7	5	(2.2)
8	10	(4.3)
9	33	(14.3)
10	49	(21.3)
11	54	(23.5)
12	75	(32.6)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 230.

Table 6

Reasons Participants Dropped Out of School

	Participants	
Reasons	n	%
Didn't like school/bored	29	(25.2)
Needed a job/needed money	19	(16.5)
Disciplinary trouble/expelled	15	(13.0)
Needed to support partner/child	13	(11.3)
Problems with teachers	10	(8.7)
Family problems	8	(7.0)
Poor grades/grade failure	7	(6.1)
Moved to new location	7	(6.1)
Other	7	(6.1)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 115.

enrollment. Young men of Asian-American background were the most likely to be attending school, and those of Puerto Rican background were the least likely to be enrolled (see Table 7).

Among those who were still in school, most were enrolled in high school (72.1%) or in high school equivalency diploma (GED) programs (22.5%). A relatively small group of young men reported that they were both attending school and working (n= 39); a much larger group reported doing neither (n = 150).

Employment/Financial Status

Just over half of all respondents (50.7%) received all of their financial support from their families (occasionally supplemented by their own earnings); 21.9% relied completely on public assistance; and 9.7% reported some combination of family support, personal earnings, and public assistance. The remaining 17.6% either attributed their financial support to "other" sources, or declined to answer this question. Overall, most young men were unemployed (65.5%). The remaining 34.5% said they did hold jobs; over half of these (57.5%) worked part-time. Not surprisingly, most of the young men who did work held entry-level jobs that required relatively little specialized training. Many worked in service industries (such as fast food restaurants, hotels, car washes), as janitors or maintenance workers, or in factories (on assembly lines, as machine operators). A few held clerical positions, while others reported moving between a series of "odd jobs".

As with school enrollment, employment status was found to be significantly related to ethnic background. As shown in Table 8, two groups--Mexican Americans and Whites--were most likely to be employed; Blacks and American Indians, on the other hand, were most likely to be unemployed. Yet, regardless of ethnicity or current job status, most young men (86.5%) reported that they were actively job-hunting.

Finally, according to the reports of the young men about their partners, adolescent mothers and mothers-to-be lived in families with appreciable access to government sources of financial support. Two-thirds of the sample of young men said that their partners (or their partner's families) received government support (66.4%), while only 17.9% said their partners were supported by wage labor; the remaining

Table 7

Participants' School Enrollment Status by Ethnic Background

Ethnic Background

School Enrollment Status	White		Black		American Indian		Mexican American		Puerto Rican		Other Hispanic		Asian American		Total Sample	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Enrolled	24	(25.8)	64	(46.0)	7	(28.0)	13	(50.0)	5	(13.5)	10	(38.5)	9	(47.4)	132	(35.8)
Not Enrolled	69	(74.2)	75	(54.0)	18	(72.0)	13	(50.0)	32	(86.5)	16	(61.5)	10	(52.6)	236	(64.2)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 368.
x (7) = 24.16, p .05

Table 8

Participants' Employment Status by Ethnic Background

Employment Status	White		Black		American Indian		Mexican American		Puerto Rican		Other Hispanic		Asian American		Total Sample	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Employed	41	(44.6)	36	(25.9)	6	(23.1)	14	(53.8)	14	(37.8)	9	(34.6)	6	(31.6)	126	(34.5)
Unemployed	51	(55.4)	103	(74.1)	20	(76.9)	12	(46.2)	23	(62.2)	17	(65.4)	13	(68.4)	242	(65.5)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 368.
x (7) = 16.36, p .05

15.7% said they did not have the information necessary to answer this question.

Summary

This group was made up predominantly of 15- to 19-year-old first-time fathers, living primarily either with their mothers or in large extended family settings. The group was racially diverse, with over 1/3 Black, 1/4 White, and 1/4 Hispanic. At first contact with their local program, approximately 2/3 had no high school degree nor G.E.D.; 2/3 reported being unemployed as well. With this descriptive information as a backdrop, the following section will explore four commonly held myths about teen fathers.

Commonly Held Myths

Myth #1: Teen Fathers are Ignorant About Contraception

Many people believe that adolescent males become teen fathers because they have no knowledge about conception and contraception. This section explores the reported sexuality of the teen fathers, as well as their knowledge of, attitudes about, and utilization of contraception.

Sexuality

The average age when the young men in the sub-sample offering baseline data (see above) became sexually active was just over 14 years. Reported age of first intercourse ranged from 6 to 21, with the great majority of cases (89.3%) falling between the ages of 11 and 17. But whatever their age at first intercourse, most respondents (81.4%) reported that they and their partners did not use any method of contraception (see Table 9). Among those few who did contracept at first intercourse, equal proportions of young men reported the use of condoms and birth control pills (6.9% each). Other methods of contraception were virtually ignored.

Contraceptive Knowledge and Attitudes

As shown in Table 10, well over three-quarters of these young men disagreed that pregnancy is an exclusively female responsibility (87.6), and agreed that the use of condoms is a good way to prevent a partner from becoming pregnant (82.2%). Similarly, the majority of young men understood that pregnancy could occur even during their first episode of intercourse with a partner (76.4%), that a young woman is more likely to conceive at a particular time in her monthly cycle (75.1%), and that birth control pills must be taken on a daily basis in order to be maximally effective (77.8%). Most also understood the risks associated with the use of withdrawal as a method of contraception (66%), or the lack of relationship between the female orgasm and conception (69.1%).

Contraceptive Utilization

Young men were also asked about their typical use of contraception. A substantial proportion of respondents (41.7%) said that they (and their partners) had never used any method of contraception whatsoever. Among the young men who reported any use of contraception (56.3% of the sample), the average age of first use was just under 16 years--nearly two years after the average age of first intercourse. Only 2.0% of the

Table 9

Method of Contraception Used by Participants at First Intercourse

Method Used	Participants	
	n	%
Condom	14	(6.9)
Birth control pills	14	(6.9)
Foam	0	--
Diaphragm	0	--
IUD	2	(1.0)
Rhythm	1	(0.5)
Don't know	7	(3.4)
Did not contracept	166	(81.4)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 204.

Table 10

Knowledge of Birth Control Scale

Items	Agree n	Agree %	Disagree n	Disagree %
a) If your partner becomes pregnant, it's her fault not yours, because she should have protected herself.	25	(12.4)	176	(87.6)
b) Your partner can get pregnant the first time you and she have intercourse.	152	(76.4)	47	(23.6)
c) When you and your partner are having sex, and you withdraw before you have an orgasm, she cannot get pregnant.	66	(34.0)	128	(66.0)
d) Your partner is most likely to become pregnant ten days to two weeks after her period begins.	127	(75.1)	42	(24.9)
e) Your partner cannot get pregnant unless she has an orgasm while you're having sex.	58	(30.9)	130	(69.1)
f) If your partner is on the pill and she misses a day, she can get pregnant.	147	(77.8)	42	(22.2)
g) Using a rubber is a good way for you to prevent your partner from becoming pregnant.	162	(82.2)	35	(17.8)

sample said that they "didn't know" whether or not they/their partners had used any method of contraception at any time.

Among the sub-group reporting any use of contraception, certain methods were clearly more popular than others. As shown in Table 11, the most commonly used methods of birth control (whether used alone or in combination with other methods) were the condom (42.3%) and the birth control pill (32.7%). Female barrier methods (foam, the diaphragm, the IUD) and rhythm were considerably less popular.

In general, fathers and fathers-to-be alike reported that their partner's pregnancy had not been planned (74.2%); only 19% said the pregnancy was intentional, and the remaining 6.9% said they were "not sure." Fathers who were married to their child's mother were somewhat more likely to report that the pregnancy had been planned (33.3%), but this trend did not reach statistical significance. While almost all of the young men (95.2%) felt certain that they were the biological father of their partner's child, a few (2.0%) were not sure, and a few others (2.8%) were deliberately taking on the role of surrogate or "social" father because of the priority they gave to their relationship with the child's mother.

Summary

Contrary to cultural expectations, our sample of respondents were not ignorant about sex and contraception. In fact, these young men were fairly knowledgeable concerning reproduction, and were also well-informed about various methods of contraception. However, there was a tremendous gap between their knowledge and their actual behavior--at least in terms of taking measures to prevent unplanned pregnancies.

Myth #2: Teen Fathers are Non-Caring, Unconnected, "Hit-and-Run" Victimizers

Adolescent fathers are typically regarded as "fly-by-night", unsupportive, unfeeling victimizers of teenaged women. They are depicted as uncaring about the young woman, abandoning her at the first sign of trouble. This section presents data reflecting on this stereotype--both the relationship with the child's mother and his other support networks.

Table 11

Methods of Contraception Ever Used by Participants and Their Female Partners

Method Used	Participants	
	n	%
Condom	71	(42.3)
Birth control pills	55	(32.7)
Foam	17	(10.1)
Diaphragm	10	(5.9)
IUD	6	(3.6)
Rhythm	9	(5.4)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 168.

Relationship with the Child's Mother

Nearly three-quarters of this group (73.3%) considered the young women their "girlfriends"; 9.7% were married; and 4.0% categorized their relationships as "other". (Usually, this meant that the young couple was living together or engaged to be married.) Of the remaining few, 8.6% said the young women were "just friends," and 4.3% reported that they no longer had contact with the mother of their child.

Young men were also asked how long they had known their partners. The average duration of these relationships was more than two years. Only 4.5% reported knowing their partners for six months or less, while nearly three-quarters (73.1%) reported that their relationships had lasted for more than one year (see Table 12).

The young men were also asked how frequently they had contact with their female partners. As Table 13 shows, the majority (85.0%) reported seeing their partners at least once a week, underscoring findings discussed earlier about the relatedness between these young couples. Nonetheless, when asked whom they turned to when they faced problems in their role as fathers, very few young men (6.1%) named their female partners. Instead, they frequently cited their own parents (36.9%), staff members at their local Teen Father Collaboration program site (22.7%), and members of their extended families, especially older siblings (21.7%).

Family Support

Young fathers and fathers-to-be were asked several questions about their naturally occurring support networks. The great majority of young men (73.4%) reported that their parents were helpful to them as they adjusted to the demands of fatherhood. Parents provided material assistance as well as emotional and psychological support. In addition, the majority of young men (68.9%) reported that their parents had expressed "special feelings" about their son's fatherhood--feelings that ran the gamut from disappointment and anger, to joy and excitement.

Many frequently reported that their parents had initially felt disappointed and unhappy, but had become more positive over time--especially after the birth of the baby.

Table 12

Duration of Relationship Between Participant and His Female Partner

Duration of Relationship	Participants n	%
up to 6 months	16	(4.5)
between 6 months and one year	79	(22.4)
between one and two years	127	(36.1)
between two and three years	54	(15.3)
between three and four years	34	(9.7)
between four and five years	18	(5.1)
more than five years	24	(6.8)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 352.

Table 13

Frequency of Contact Between Participants and Their Female Partners

Frequency of Contact	Participants	
	n	%
Daily	145	(72.5)
Once a week	25	(12.5)
Once or twice a month	3	(1.5)
Time to time	16	(8.0)
Almost never	8	(4.0)
Never	3	(1.5)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 200.

> At first my mom was freaked out. Now, she's cool.
>
> They thought we were too young, but after the baby came they got real excited.

Summary

Taken together, findings about type and duration of relationship suggest that these young men were generally supported by their families and quite committed to their partners. This would be less surprising if the majority of participants in Collaboration services had enrolled at their partner's request; but, as we have already seen, this was not the case. Thus, our data clearly defy the common belief that all teenage fathers are unconnected "hit-an-run" victimizers of young women. It is clear, rather, that there are teenage fathers who have children with partners to whom they are close and connected.

MYTH #3: Teen Fathers Do Not Care About Their Children

Teenage fathers are not only portrayed as not caring about the women with whom they have sex; they are also depicted as totally detached from and unconcerned about their offspring. In this section, information on this stereotype based on this (albeit self-selected) group is explored, including the child's living arrangements and the father's satisfaction with these arrangements, the father's contact with and support for his child.

The Child's Living Arrangements

All of the young men who made at least one contact with Collaboration programs of service were asked to describe their child's actual or anticipated living arrangements as well as their feelings about those arrangements. Fathers and fathers-to-be did not vary systematically in their patterns of response. As shown in Table 14, the most prevalent living arrangement placed the child in the care of the mother and her family (52.6%). In an additional 7.5% of all cases, the young father was also part of the young mother's family household. Children were placed in the care of their father's family much less frequently: only 4.6% were with their father and his family, and another 10.9% were with the father's family and both young parents. In 20.7% of

Table 14

Children's Living Arrangements by Participant's Relationship with His Female Partner

Child Does/Will Live With:	Type of Relationship											
	Married		Girlfriend		Other Close Relationship		Just Friends		Don't See Each Other		Total Sample	
Mother's family including teen mother	7	(20.0)	129	(51.2)	8	(53.3)	25	(86.2)	14	(87.5)	183	(52.6)
Mother's family including both teen parents	1	(2.9)	24	(9.5)	1	(6.7)	--	--	--	--	26	(7.5)
Father's family including teen father	2	(5.7)	13	(5.2)	1	(6.7)	--	--	1	(6.3)	17	(4.8)
Father's family including both teen parents	10	(28.6)	25	(9.9)	2	(13.3)	1	(3.4)	--	--	38	(10.9)
Both teen parents only	12	(34.3)	54	(21.4)	3	(20.0)	2	(6.9)	--	--	71	(20.5)
Other, not including either teen parent	33	(8.6)	7	(2.8)	--	--	1	(3.4)	1	(6.3)	12	(3.5)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 347.
x (20) = 50.10, p .05

all cases, the child was living exclusively with the two young parents, while in only a small percentage of cases did the child's living arrangements fail to include either parent (3.5%). Not surprisingly, these arrangements were shown to be statistically related to the kind of relationship that young fathers reported having with their female partners. When the two young parents were "just friends" or said they no longer saw one another, the child was much more likely to be living with the young mother and her family. On the other hand, when the two young parents were married, the child was somewhat more likely to be living with both young parents in a household of their own.

Fathers whose children had already been born were more likely than prospective fathers to express some measure of dissatisfaction with their child's living arrangements (see Table 15). Reasons for this dissatisfaction included the disappointment of many young fathers who found they could not support their partner and child and "live as a family," and, less frequently, complaints about the "overprotectiveness" of the young mother or the undue influence exerted by the child's maternal grandmother. These findings underscore how much involvement these young men wanted to have with their children.

Contact with the Child

Young men were next asked how frequently they were (or would be) in contact with their child. The response patterns of actual fathers and prospective fathers did not vary systematically, but the relationship between the young man and his female partner again was significantly related to the frequency with which he saw (or planned to see) his child.

The overwhelming majority of young men reported daily contact with their child (81.6%). Small percentages of young men said they saw their child "once a week" or "once or twice a month"; even fewer reported no contact at all. As shown in Table 16, when the two young parents were "just friends," or no longer saw one another, young fathers had less frequent and less regular contact with their children. When the relationship between the young father and his partner was closer or more committed, he was much more likely to have daily contact with his child.

Table 15

Participants' Satisfaction with Child's Living Arrangements by Fathering Status

	Fathering Status					
Satisfaction	Prospective Fathers		Actual Fathers		Total Sample	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Satisfied	184	(91.1)	134	(83.8)	318	(87.8)
Not Satisfied	18	(8.9)	26	(16.2)	44	(12.2)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 362.
x (1) = 3.84, p .05

Table 16

Frequency of Father-Child Contact by Participant's Relationship With His Female Partner

	Type of Relationship											
Father Sees or Plans to See Child:	Married		Girlfriend		Other Close Relationship		Just Friends		Don't See Each Other		Total Sample	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Daily	36	(100)	227	(87.3)	11	(78.6)	10	(31.3)	3	(30.0)	287	(81.6)
Once a Week	--	--	12	(4.6)	--	--	5	(15.6)	1	(10.0)	18	(5.1)
Once-twice a month	--	--	9	(3.5)	2	(14.3)	7	(21.9)	1	(10.0)	19	(5.4)
Time to time	--	--	3	(1.2)	--	--	4	(12.5)	2	(20.0)	9	(2.5)
Almost never	--	--	6	(2.3)	--	--	4	(12.5)	2	(20.)	12	(3.4)
Never	--	--	3	(1.2)	1	(7.1)	2	(6.3)	1	(10.0)	7	(2.0)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 357.
x (20) = 103.78, p .05

Support for the Child

Young men also indicated all of the sources from which their child received (or would receive) financial support. Here, the responses of fathers and prospective fathers were statistically different, although (as shown on Table 17), there were similarities between the two groups as well.

Most fathers (34.7%) and prospective fathers (33.7%) attributed the support of their child to both their own families and the child's mother's families. Many reported that they alone were (or would be) responsible for their child's financial support; this intention, while unrealistic, again points to the level of responsibility these young men wanted to assume in relation to their children. Just over 65% of all fathers-to-be said that they planned to contribute to the financial support of their child, while 74.1% of all actual fathers reported that they did, in fact, make monetary contributions.

Finally, anticipating that many young fathers might be unable to support their child financially, young men were asked about the "in-kind" contributions they made (or planned to make) to enhance their child's well being. The response patterns of fathers and prospective fathers did not vary systematically; all respondents said they made at least some in-kind contribution to their children. Among those who specified their contributions, food and babysitting were most frequently cited (15.6% and 15.2% respectively). Next came clothing (14.2%), diapers (11.5%), taking children to appointments (12.7%), and providing toys and books (11.5%). Fewer than ten percent of all young men said they were able to contribute more expensive items like baby furniture or medicine. A few classified their contributions as "other," (commonly including such intangibles as moral support, love, and being a good father). Overall, given that these young men had relatively limited access to economic resources, according to their reports they contributed a great deal to their children.

Summary

Here again, our data challenge the belief that teenage males do not care about and are not involved with their children. Typically, the children of these teenage parents lived not with their fathers, but with their mothers and/or with their maternal grandparents. Nonetheless, the

Table 17

Sources of Financial Contributions to Child by Fathering Status

Source of Financial Contribution	Fathering Status					
	Prospective Fathers		Actual Fathers		Total Sample	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Both families	61	(33.7)	51	(34.7)	112	(34.1)
Teen mother's family	24	(13.3)	16	(10.9)	40	(12.2)
Teen father's family	12	(6.6)	8	(5.4)	20	(6.1)
Both teen parents	10	(5.5)	20	(13.6)	30	(9.1)
Teen mother only	9	(5.0)	14	(9.5)	23	(7.)
Teen father only	36	(19.9)	30	(20.4)	66	(20.1)
Other sources	8	(4.4)	4	(2.7)	12	(3.7)
Don't know	21	(11.6)	4	(2.7)	25	(7.6)

Note: Total number of valid cases = 328.
x (7) = 17.82, p .05

overwhelming majority of teenage fathers maintained daily contact with their children. Furthermore, in spite of their limited access to economic resources, over 3/4 of the young men said that they (or their own parents) contributed to the child's financial support. Most of the young men said they also made in-kind contributions to their children: food, diapers, clothing and toys. Thus, we found strong evidence of connectedness between the young fathers who participated in the Collaboration and their offspring.

MYTH #4: Teen Fathers Cannot Be Reached or Served

When the Teen Father Collaboration was initiated, many were dubious that the teenage fathers would utilize the services which were being developed. This section explores the critical issues of methods of first contact and subsequent demand for services. The actual impact of these services is discussed in Chapter 6.

Initial Contact

Young men were asked how they had first learned about the availability of services for adolescent fathers; their responses provide one measure of the relative effectiveness of various agency recruitment strategies. Just over one-third of the young men (37.3%) were referred to the agency by their female partners. Since most Collaboration agencies had long histories of providing services to young mothers, the use of such referrals to attract male clients was common, especially at the outset of the Collaboration. However, nearly two-thirds of the young men learned about agency services in other ways: 22.4% from the contacts made by agency outreach workers throughout the community, 8.6% from peers, 4.6% from their schools, and 2.4% from the local mass media. The remaining one-quarter (24.6%) credited other sources of information, usually their own relatives or members of their partner's family. These findings have important implications for recruitment of teen fathers. Agencies need to develop a variety of other outreach strategies as well to reach teen fathers and not rely solely on referrals from young women.

How did they react when, whatever their source of referral, these young men first learned that a special program of services existed to offer them assistance? Interview data indicated a range of responses.

Darrell, at 19, was initially afraid and dubious when his high school guidance counselor broached the subject to his enrollment in a teen father program:

> When she first told me about the program, I just freaked out. People say I'm really career-oriented. And this, like, was just so much setback. The child--I hadn't fully accepted the idea. I personally really didn't want to think about the matter. But the more my counselor spoke to me, the more I began to accept the idea. 'What have I got to lose?' I thought. I realized I was just scared.

This reaction was not uncommon. Many of the young men were somewhat overwhelmed by their new responsibilities as fathers, and were reluctant to admit they needed help and support. Other young fathers reacted quite differently, however; they felt relieved to find out that help was available and eager to take advantage of it. Raul, a 19-year-old father-to-be, explained his reaction this way:

> I found out about this program through my friend Pedro, who found out from his cousin. Right away, when Pedro told me, I thought it was a good idea. At the time I was desperate for any kind of help--any kind of support I could get. When something like this happens--having a baby--a lot of people back out. But I'm here, right in the middle. I reached out. Right now I'm going to stick to this for what help they give me and what help I can give out to other guys.

Services

Response patterns for ultilized services varied by site, reflecting the availability of components of the program. Nonetheless, across all sites, responses encompassed a wide variety of overlapping needs; and, almost without exception, individual participants took advantage of multiple services, highlighting the need for comprehensive programming.

The most frequently requested services, presented in rank order, are described on Table 18. Given that, as reported above, so many young men were out of work, it follows that the job assistance (including vocational counseling, vocational training, job skill classes, and actual job placement) was the most utilized across all eight program sites. In the words of two young fathers, these services were of considerable value:

> I learned how to communicate with others in the job training class. It made me feel more confident about filling out applications and meeting employers because I got to practice doing those things so much before I went to the real place to try and get a job.
>
> If I had never found out about this agency, I might never have gotten such a good job. If I had gotten just an ordinary job, I would have continued to stay at home and would never have gotten married. Now with my job, I get a lot of benefits. It keeps me and my wife and baby away from welfare.

Educational assistance, including preparation for the high school equivalency diploma, referrals to alternative schools, and help in seeking post-high-school training, was also frequently in great demand at all program sites. In addition, parenting skills training--including hands-on child care classes, and instruction in child development--was frequently utilized

> I don't know about taking care of a baby. That's why I joined this program. They're teaching us how to hold a baby, put on diapers, fix formulas...even after my baby comes, they are going to continue these classes.
>
> I came here to get different points of view as to how to properly raise my child. I myself had a pretty good idea, but if you're only one person, you can't always know how to do things. You can

Table 18

Most Frequently Requested Services: Rank Order by Program Site

Program and Location	Services Requested 1	2	3
YMCA Bridgeport, CT	job assistance	educational assistance	counseling
TAPP Louisville, KY	parenting skills	job assistance	pre-natal assistance
DIW Minneapolis, MN	parenting skills	fathers support group	job assistance
MCP Hospital Philadelphia, PA	job assistance	parenting skills	educational assistance
NCJW Portland, OR	job assistance	fathers support group	parenting skills
YWCA Poughkeepsie, NY	job assistance	educational assistance	parenting skills
Face to Face St. Paul, MN	job assistance	personal counseling	--
T.A.P.P. San Francisco, CA	personal counseling	job assistance	educational assistance

> get ideas from listening to other people. That's been real helpful to me.

Personal counseling, the opportunity to participate in a young father's support group, and the option to participate in pre-natal care and instruction were also important to many young men in several different programs. A variety of other services used with less consistency included financial and material assistance, relationship counseling, legal advocacy, family planning information, and recreational and social opportunities.

Summary

Although the Collaboration service providers encountered considerable resistance when they first set out to recruit young fathers, after two years, it is clear that positive outreach results were forthcoming. Considerably more intense, aggressive, and creative, outreach strategies were necessary in recruiting teen fathers than in reaching young mothers; however, persistence pays off. In fact, by the end of the demonstration period, most Collaboration sites were facing a problem they never anticipated: having too few staff members to work with all the young men who wanted their help and were willing to come in to get it.

Our experience also shows that young fathers confront a myriad of problems, both as adolescents and as parents; and service programs therefore need to be as comprehensive as possible. Important services include counseling, education, job training, preparation for the birth and family planning. Another point is also worth emphasizing here. Service providers sometimes told us that certain young fathers, after an initial program contact, seemed to lose interest. These young men could easily have been written off, thereby reaffirming the myth of their lack of commitment to obtaining services. But it turned out that something else was occurring. These young men were juggling a staggering array of responsibilities--school, part-time jobs, family demands, and all the changes that come with parenthood. They simply did not have the time to attend service programs on a regular basis. Thus, services must be designed to match the lives and special needs of these young men as well.

Implications

This chapter has presented some preliminary findings about the largest pool of data, to date, focusing solely on teen fathers. Several commonly held myths about teen fathers were found to be quite untrue--at least with our group. For example, the teen fathers were surprisingly well informed about sex, conception and contraception. Thus, the lack of knowledge could not be held completely responsible for their unplanned pregnancies. Clearly, intervention approaches need to move beyond simple instruction so that adolescent males can become equal partners in preventing conception.

Second, we found the teen fathers to be very involved with and connected to their families, their partners and their children. Obviously, due to the selection bias of the group, this may not generalize to the population of all teen fathers. There is now reason to believe that there are a large number of adolescent males who want to share in the responsibilities of partnering and parenting, and who are willing to work to gain the needed skills.

Finally, we found that despite our initial skepticism, many teen fathers did indeed utilize services made available to them. However, the style and range of services are areas which should be examined carefully by service providers. Fathers consistently requested a number of services, reflecting the "multi-problemmed" nature of their lives. In addition, the more traditional style of service provision (where the "client" comes to the office on a regular basis during the hours of 9-5 on weekdays) clearly was not useful for many fathers. Innovative and flexible styles of outreach and service delivery are required to meet the needs of this special population of young men.

CHAPTER SIX

Service Programs for Teen Fathers

Critical Ingredients

Obstacles and Barriers to Working with Teen Fathers and Fathers-to-Be

The overall success of the Teen Father Collaboration in reaching and serving young fathers and prospective fathers did not come easily; formidable obstacles had to be overcome. These barriers divided themselves into three major areas: problems with the teen male population itself, program staffing difficulties, and organizational issues.

The Population. Traditionally, social service agencies have offered assistance to females; this has been especially true in the area of teenage pregnancy and parenthood. Given their history of exclusion, when young men first learned about services for teen fathers some were surprised, others skeptical, and still others wary. Service delivery staff needed to concentrate their efforts on overcoming young men's expectations that they would be punished for their partner's pregnancy and held accountable for child support. Young men needed to be convinced that Collaboration services were designed to help them cope with their own personal problems: educational, vocational, and psychological as well as those related to fathering and partnering.

Some young men were difficult to engage because they took on a "macho", independent stance. Others said they were willing to participate, but demonstrated their age-appropriate adolescent self-centeredness in not always following through with what they "promised" to program staff members. Some, for example, failed to show up for scheduled job interviews or counseling sessions; others seemed to drop out of service programs--only to re-appear after weeks or months had passed. As one counselor stated, "these young men have not formulated adult attitudes yet."

Other young men who attended Collaboration services on an irregular basis had little choice in the matter. They were attempting to juggle an unrealistic and almost impossible array of responsibilities: school, work, regular visits with their partners and children. Many young men were impoverished, and found it difficult to afford transportation costs in order to get to the agencies. Others were fearful of going out of their "territories" to participate in services that were deliberately scheduled at night, so as not to conflict with the timing of school or work.

Each of these obstacles had to be dealt with by agencies in the Collaboration. Program staff, well aware of the developmental needs of adolescents, were flexible but straight-forward in their expectations. Transportation money was often given to the adolescents, or vans were used to transport them. Service components were often re-scheduled to suit the needs of the majority of young men who wanted to participate. Over time, many teen males did utilize services, some coming very regularly, others attending as their demanding schedules and their maturity allowed.

Program Staffing. An agency's ability to recruit and serve teen fathers was severly hampered if it did not have the resources or if the agency chose not to hire at least one full-time program staff person. As one administrator stated:

> A program cannot be 'piggy-backed' onto another one. If there's not one person coming into the agency who wouldn't have a job if he or she wasn't working with teen dads, the program can't work.

This full-time commitment, by itself, was insufficient to insure an effective program. The staff person hired to work directly with the teenage male population had to be comfortable with and receptive to the needs and attitudes of these young men. One key indicator of this comfort was the staff member's willingness to reach out to young male clients throughout the community at teenage hang-outs. One staff member who was ultimately unsuccessfull in his efforts to reach and serve teenage fathers reflected on his limitations:

> I want to deal with people who are interested in getting services from me. If they feel that I have something to offer them and they show their interest, then I feel comfortable. Just walking up to somebody is not something I can do.

Given the coaxing and persuasion that so many young men needed in order to break down their distrust of agencies and social service staff, Collaboration program staff found that they had to "sell" their agency's program. They had to recognize and adjust to the difference in working with males and females, and acknowledge the importance of a more active and diversified recruitment process where males were involved.

On a more subtle level, there also had to be a good "fit" between the personal characteristics of the service provider and the teen father population. A distant and formal staff person proved to be much less effective than someone whom the teen fathers felt was their advocate and confidant, someone on whom they could rely. The young men were quick to recognize when a counselor understood their needs and was prepared to offer them the services they needed. In the great majority of cases, successful programs were staffed by male counselors who were themselves fathers.

While one full-time staff member was generally responsible for each Collaboration program, this limitation in staff size had obvious effects on the number of teen fathers who could be served at each site. When interviewed about the possibility of serving more teen fathers, almost every service provider said that there were more teen fathers "out there" who wanted and needed services, but that limited staff presented a barrier to working with greater numbers of young men.

Organizational Issues. Each service agency which participated in the Collaboration had to go beyond the hiring of competent staff in order to successfully execute their programs for young fathers. The organizations themselves had to demonstrate a belief that providing services to young fathers was an essential step in ameliorating the serious problems of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood. When an organization was resistant to this idea, failure occurred.

Support for providing services to teen fathers had to come from the top. This meant that the chief administrator and members of the Board of Directors were essential to the effectiveness of the programs. One agency administrator--whose program was largely ineffective--indicated that such support was lacking, both because of the Board's strong orientation to serving women, and his own perception of the need to devote available resources to young mothers but not their male partners:

> On a scale of 1 to 10, my own commitment to making this organization more focused on men is 5. I'm really dedicated to women. That's where I see it. I can see the teen fathers' stuff as being important because it lends to the growth and development of the child, but when it comes down to services to males for this agency, it's not a priority.

Messages from the top permeated staff attitudes at all levels. The feeling of not being supported led to fear, anger, and eventual lassitude in bringing teen fathers in: "I'm feeling that what I'm doing in seeing teen fathers is wrong...or that it meets with constant criticism," stated one service provider. Stated another, "Especially in my advocacy work, I feel that I'm working at cross purposes with the agency's basic philosophy of protecting and serving women."

When the attitude of the administration was positive and constructive, problems that surfaced around service delivery for teen fathers were met and overcome. In one agency, for instance, the teen father component was originally designed to operate separately from the program for young mothers. The agency's director, seeking a more effective overall program, encouraged all staff to work interdependently.

> The decision was made that the fatherhood project had to be integrated into the whole agency program--that there wouldn't be any in-groups or out-groups. Now that it is integrated, it is part and parcel of the larger program and will continue to be in the future as well.

It is important to note that obstacles to serving teen fathers were overcome by most of the programs in the Collaboration. Three ingredients were essential, however. First, there had to be an understanding that teenage fathers are--first and foremost--adolescents, facing a variety of developmental tasks at the same time they are confronting the demands of parenthood. Second, funds had to be allocated to support at least one full-time staff person whose job depended on his ability to reach and serve male clients. Finally, the organization itself needed to indicate top-level endorsement for the sometimes risky step of extending services and assistance to the male partner in adolescent parenting.

Essential Outreach Strategies

It is clear from the work of the Collaboration that outreach to teenage fathers and prospective fathers must be considerably more assertive, broad-based, and sustained than similar efforts to reach young mothers. Outreach workers need to do more than simply inform prospective male clients of the availability of services. They need to begin to engage the young man's trust, and overcome the long-standing belief that social service organizations are geared exclusively toward meeting the needs of female clients. It is equally clear that a well planned and carefully targeted outreach effort, staffed by "street smart" male outreach workers, can successfully attract many more young men into teen father programs than was previously believed. Essential outreach strategies include the following:

1) The young mother or mother-to-be must be informed about the services available to her partner, and encouraged to urge that he take advantage of them--for her own benefit, her partner's, and her child's. Agencies that already work with young mothers will find that this is the single most productive and reliable way to recruit young men into their program. They should involve all members of their staff in this process, not just those few who work directly with teen fathers.

2) Referral linkages need to be established throughout the community with staff members at other youth-serving agencies such as schools, health clinics, job-training programs, the juvenile justice system. Staff at these agencies routinely come into contact with young parents. If they are aware that a teen father program exists--and have met and talked with the program's staff-they can become important sources of contact and referral for young fathers.

3) The program's own outreach worker(s) must be willing to actively approach teenage males in settings throughout the community. Local teenage hangouts, such as basketball courts, pool halls, recreation

centers, bars, and street corners are all potentially important places for establishing contact with young men who are themselves fathers or who have friends facing early parenthood.

4) A concerted effort must be made to inform the public-at-large about the availability of services for teen fathers. Public service announcements or feature stories in local newspapers, radio and TV talk shows, even flyers hung on storefronts can be effective recruitment strategies. Such messages often do not reach young men directly, but they do inform many others (family members and professional alike) who know and care about the welfare of young parents. In turn, they can become important sources of referral.

Essential Components of Successful Programs for Teenage Fathers

During the two years of the Teen Father Collaboration, it has become evident that a successful program for teen fathers should include the following essential components:

1) There must be top-level commitment by an organization to serving teen fathers and prospective fathers, based on the belief that reaching and engaging this male population can have positive effects on the adolescent males themselves, their partners and their children. The organization's administrators must be committed to raising funds for the program, directing the supervision of staff working directly with teen males, and supporting other relevant staff members (e.g. nurses, doctors, teachers) who can provide auxilliary services to teenage fathers.

2) At least one full-time staff person, preferably a male, whose sole job in an agency is to reach and serve teen fathers and prospective fathers is essential. This staff person must demonstrate both a dedication to this population, and the skills and expertise necessary to meet their diverse needs. Areas of skill should include counseling, outreach, community networking and referral. There must also be a positive "match" between the staff member's personal characteristics and those of his clients--i.e., someone who is relatively young and informal and who is committed to fathering in his own life. In a setting which

serves minority clients, a staff member from a similar background is often preferable.

3) In most instances, an aggressive "street-smart" outreach worker is also vital to the program. This staff member must know the local community well, establishing referral networks with other youth--serving agencies and going freely into teenage hangouts. He must be skilled in "selling" the program to young fathers; he must also "speak their language," literally as well as figuratively, so that they trust him and understand that they can benefit from participating in the services he can provide or guide them to.

An organization must offer a comprehensive array of services to teen fathers and prospective fathers either on-site or through referrals in the community. These should include:

a) Counseling. This is usually individual counseling, but may also extend to peer, group, and couple's counseling. A counselor works with the young man around issues including self-esteem, his relationship to his partner, his desire to be a good father, and responsible sexuality.

b) Job-related services. Young men are taught job interviewing skills, how to scan want ads and write resumes. Whenever possible, young men receive job training and job placement as well.

c) Educational services. Young men receive assistance in preparing for their General Equivalency Diploma programs or, if appropriate, they are encouraged to finish high school. Some pursue post-high school training.

d) Parenting skills classes. These are held with the fathers and their infants and provide training in the rudiments of childcare: feeding, diapering, bathing, holding and playing with one's child. They are also an important source of helpful information about child development.

e) Pre-natal classes. These include information about nutrition, the health of the mother and the development of the fetus. In many cases, the young men participate in labor classes and act as their partner's labor coach during the delivery of their child.

f) Legal advocacy. Program staff help their male clients navigate various legal systems; e.g., welfare, juvenile justice, the paternity adjudication process.

5. A realistic number of clients. This depends on the size of the program staff and the range of responsibilities which staff members assume (e.g., outreach, counseling, parenting classes, referral, community presentations, record keeping).

Highlights of Program Impact

For young fathers and fathers-to-be, counseling services had several crucial effects. They helped young men cope with the demands of the parenting role, build strong early bonds with their children and learn how to communicate more effectively with their partner about the problems they face. Nonetheless, it is clear that young fathers require some additional kinds of assistance if they are to enhance their ability to support their offspring financially. Two kinds of service components--educational and employment-related--can address this need directly.

There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that school dropouts function at an economic disadvantage throughout early adulthood-and are therefore less likely to be able to support their dependent children. Recognizing this, Collaboration participants who had dropped out of high school were encouraged either to return to school (especially if they were young enough to do so and still graduate with their age peers) or to obtain their high school equivalency diploma. Of the 155 non-graduates who were also not enrolled in school, nearly half (46%) experienced positive educational outcomes in terms of returning to school or enrolling in GED programs. About one-third of these young men (n=28) returned to high school, while two-thirds (n=43) enrolled in and/or obtained their GED. This kind of change in the lives of young fathers holds great promise for enhancing their ability to provide for their offspring.

In the same vein, a large number of young fathers were able to achieve positive employment outcomes through their participation in Collaboration services. The explicit desire among young fathers and fathers-to-be to make adequate financial provisions for their children cannot be overemphasized. Without jobs, however, their contributions were necessarily limited. About two-thirds of Collaboration participants were unemployed job-seekers at program entry; even some of those who were working expressed interest in obtaining better jobs and higher wages. A range of services were available to these young men including job skills counseling, vocational training, and referrals for job interviews. A total of 148 young men (61.2% of those unemployed at program entry) experienced positive employment outcomes: 56 obtained part-time jobs, and 92 obtained full-time jobs. According to counselors, the preponderance of young men who got jobs contributed financially to their children--this in addition to the in-kind contributions they were also making.

Although the average length of time young men remained in programs was 6.6 months, a positive change occurred for many in these two highly significant areas: education and employment. The long range results of returning to school and finding a job are beyond the purview of this study. However these outcomes are most encouraging. They may well point to an increasingly productive life for these young men and a far more responsible role as fathers.

Young Men Most Likely to Benefit from Services: The Positive Interaction Between Staff and Clients

Background data suggested many of the attitudes of the young men who are likely to enter service programs targeted to teenage fathers and fathers-to-be (See Chapter Five). The insights of service providers who worked with these young men on a daily basis help generate a portrait of the young men who seem most likely to benefit from their program participation. Both their attitudes and the kind of interaction these young men had with agency staff are discussed in this section.

As we have already seen, the young men who come into service programs tend to be involved with their children in a variety of ways. The comments of service providers suggest that strong emotional bonds often underlie this involvement especially among the young fathers who succeed in meeting program goals:

> The really special thing about the fathers that come into the agency is the love they feel for their kids. They see that responsibility. And it's very heavy. Knowing that this kid is going to be their responsibility for at least the next 15 years--that's as old as some of them are! It's hard to comprehend. But although they can't understand it, they feel it.

Service providers frequently noted that young men translated this sense of caring and responsibility into wanting "something better" for their children. This can motivate them to become even more involved as fathers; and it often means holding higher aspirations for their children:

> These guys want something better for their children, and they always say that: 'I want something different for my child than I had. I want to be a better father than my father was to me.'

These are young men who do not want their children to live in a lower income situation like they are living in.

> The young guys I work with are motivated. They will take on the most menial job just to be able to give some support to their kids.

Service providers emphasize the magnitude of the problems which their young clients confront. Typically, when young men enter counseling, they are fearful about the future and their self-esteem is poor. They may be suspicious of service agencies, or of adults in general. They may also fear being punished for their partner's pregnancy. Despite such negative attitudes, according to several counselors there may be certain personal characteristics that distinguish the young men who eventually "make it".

> They are decent bunch of guys we work with, a real friendly sort...young men who have not totally given up hope. These aren't the guys out there who are trying to rip off the world--they're not so caught up in their own anger that they can't see us helping them.
>
> The young men I work with best don't have what I call a "pimp mentality". They don't feel better off hanging out on the corner with friends, too far off into the street culture to see that we have something positive to offer.

One counselor speculates that age is an important factor, that "it's the younger guys, like 18 and under, who come in for help," because they are more receptive to seeking assistance--less "hardened" by life. Several counselors underscore the already well-documented assertion that young men who come into programs and utilize services are those who have a positive relationship with the mother of their child:

> If a guy becomes a father by accident, not being involved in a relationship--you know, if he becomes a father without any foresight whatever, divorced from a relationship--then it's hard for that guy to connect with his baby.

None of the service providers was content, however, to classify certain young fathers as likely "losers" and leave it at that. Rather, they emphasized their own responsibility in reaching out--again and again--in the hope of achieving eventual success:

> I get young men who don't seem motivated. But then, it depends on the counselor. If a counselor has a good raport with the guys, and they know he is their advocate and that he is going to support them, then their idea of what they can accomplish in life can be reversed.
>
> Sometimes it's the ones who don't seem motivated who come back! and I think I'm a factor in that. I think being their advocate, and the fact that they know I'm available daily for them, gives these kids the feeling that somebody has an interest in them. They have a feeling of love and support, which many times they haven't gotten from their fathers; they have told me that.

Service providers also draw the connection between the timing of service delivery and the progression of needs experienced by young fathers and fathers-to-be. Sometimes, they note, there is not a good enough "fit;" then, it becomes important to maintain a connection with a potential client until things change over time:

> Maybe a young guy is in school, and his girlfriend is two months pregnant. He can't go to pre-labor classes yet, and he doesn't want a job right away. So we can't offer him anything at this moment.
>
> The key in this situation is to keep the young man's file on inactive, but to send him weekly letters letting him know what's going on in the program. Or, if he has a telephone, to call him regularly. Then, doggone if he doesn't call--three, four, five months later, go find him, talk to him! The thing is to let him know you care.

In other words, several factors--the young man's emotional attachment to his child, his aspirations for the child's future, his relationship with his female partner, and his own attitude--interact with the availability and timing of services and the service provider's style of operation to define a sub-population of young men most likely to benefit from their participation in teen father programs. One counselor summarized this complicated portrait in these words:

> Sometimes these young men have a pretty strong sense of initiative to find services, get information on parenting, nutrition...a variety of things. But others, you have to work with real consistently, dropping in on them, creating a personal relationship, even providing emergency food and shelter. But these guys, too, eventually become important clients. You just have to try harder.

Next Steps

Documentation of the Teen Father Collaboration strongly suggests that many adolescent fathers may have the potential to become caring and responsible parents, and that if appropriate support is provided to these young men, this potential can be realized. Although the Collaboration was exploratory, it generated substantial knowledge concerning effective ways of reaching and serving adolescent fathers and fathers-to-be.

An important next step is to organize the new knowledge and present it in a format, such as a manual, which can be easily understood and widely applied by service providers who want to extend services to teenage fathers. The document will also provide the rationale for involving teenage fathers in systems of service delivery so that agencies which have not been exposed to the issue can develop awareness of its significance both for the lives of teen parents themselves and for society at large. Wide dissemination of the manual will be critical.

A second direction is to encourage the agencies which have participated in the Teen Father Collaboration to become resource centers for other service deliverers in their geographical region. Given adequate support, these centers can help others develop know-how in reaching and serving teenage fathers. At the same time, the centers would serve to disseminate knowledge about teen fathers and the importance of working with this previously neglected population.

A third step involves the expansion of service delivery to include not only the teenage father but also the extended families of pregnant and parenting teenagers who are often centrally involved. Toward this end, five of the eight sites in the Teen Father Collaboration are participants in the Adolescent Family Life Collaboration, funded by the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs (OAPP), Department of Health and Human Services. This new project is aimed at demonstrating and documenting the importance and methods of helping families become a network of support for their pregnant and parenting teenagers--an important vehicle for enabling these teenagers to become competent parents.

Beyond the issues of service delivery, it will also be important to consider directions for other kinds of research on teenage parenthood. For example, service providers in the Teen Father Collaboration, frequently worked as advocates for young fathers in the area of paternity adjudication. Since more young fathers are being encouraged to take on more responsible roles as parents, their legal rights must be secured, not only for themselves, but also for their child's well-being. A national study on state-of-the art in paternity adjudication might well be a first step in exposing the loopholes in and complications of this cumbersome legal process.

Lastly, it is the area of adolescent pregnancy prevention itself, that warrants intensive exploration and support. Systematic research must address this problem, a problem which not only devastates individual and family lives, but which takes a tremendous toll on the nation's economy. One promising area of pregnancy prevention lies in the growing number of school-based programs which have begun to tackle this problem successfully. More funding and research however, are needed for these and other possible models (e.g. clinic-based programs, community centers) if the United States is to effectively thwart one of its most serious national problems.

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APPENDIX

This appendix contains brief descriptions of the sites which participated in the Teen Father Collaboration. Each write-up is organized similarly, to aid the reader in learning as much as possible about the different models. In each description the location and the service population of the agency is described. Next, the services offered are discussed; in some agencies which had particular hurdles to face, these are depicted along with their attempts to alleviate the difficulties. Finally, the current status of the Teen Father program is described; where applicable, the resources which the site has garnered in order to support the continuation are noted, as well.

Agency
Teen Fatherhood of Project of
The Greater Bridgeport Adolescent
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Local Funding Source
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Foundation
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Dr. Edward C. Keane,
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Sister Helen Clifford, Co-Director
Geraldine Johnson, Co-Director
Vincent Marturano, Executive Director
Manuel Cardona, Project Coordinator

The Greater Bridgeport Adolescent Pregnancy Program, Inc. represents a community-wide coalition of human service organizations, supported by The United Way of Eastern Fairfield County and the Educational Foundation of America. The Program's Teen Fatherhood Program is headquartered at the local YMCA, and program staff make regular referrals to several other community-based youth service organizations as appropriate (including, for example, the Bridgeport Community Health Center, and the Cardinal Shehan Center). Funding for the community's participation in the Teen Father Collaboration was awarded by the Bridgeport Area Foundation.

The YMCA might seem a somewhat unlikely program site at the outset because--unlike other agencies in the Collaboration--it had no experience in delivering services to pregnant or parenting teens. Ultimately, though the YMCA proved to be an ideal site, because of its popularity among and easy accessibility to the youth of the Bridgeport community. Located in a largely low-income, multi-ethnic neighborhood, the YMCA offers a variety of programs designed to meet the "social, spiritual, and physical needs" of several thousand young people every year.

The Greater Bridgeport Adolescent Pregnancy Program, Inc. exemplifies a collaborative approach to serving adolescents, including teen fathers: active and innovative outreach, followed by one-to-one advocacy and referral to resources that already exist throughout the community. The focus of the Teen Father Program was on Hispanic adolescents. Appropriately, the man hired by the YMCA to direct the Teen Fatherhood Program was an excellent Hispanic role model, with exceptional "street smarts" and a great deal of dedication to helping young fathers. He has gone out into the community--to recreational facilities, community centers, schools, and teen "hang-outs." As a result of these efforts, "word of this program quickly spread throughout the streets"; in fact, the program's caseload of teen fathers soon became so large that the project might have benefitted from additional staffing.

All of the young fathers who participated in the program attended an orientation sessions, which familiarized them with the range of agencies within the community which might be able to meet their needs. Then, the young men (and often their partners as well) were encouraged to make contact with appropriate resources in order to receive health care, housing, education, employability training, counseling, support groups, financial assistance, parenting skills training, and so forth. The project director made a concerted effort to make certain that services were forthcoming; he often intervened in the system when there were delays or other difficulties.

Support for the Teen Fatherhood Program continues, with financial backing from the YMCA itself, the March of Dimes, and (for some of the teen fathers associated with the Adolescent Family Life Collaboration) the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs.

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Dolores Delahanty, Board of Directors

Beginning in 1970, the Teenage Parent program (TAPP) has served approximately 400 students annually. TAPP's users generally are about 70% black, with approximately 80% of the student body below poverty level. Prior to beginning the Teen Father Project, TAPP had received national attention for its academic and maternal child health successes in its one-site service center. In one renovated school building, a student can receive medical, academic, nutrition and social services. Father involvement previously had been limited to participation in classes/seminars on pregnancy and parenting by "invitation" only; however, during 1982, an increase in requests by fathers demonstrated a pressing need for more services. Following the success of a pilot year of Saturday morning classes for fathers-to-be, expanded services were undertaken with the assistance of the Louisville Foundation.

The Teen Father Program began with a number of services: career planning, job shadowing, child-care classes, pre-natal classes, family planning, parenting classes, GED services, and a grandparents support group, unique to this program.

Especially strong program components were the group approach to counseling and the pre-natal and parenting classes taught by the medical staff. In addition, the parenting classes seemed to be the most successful method in engaging the couple after the birth of the baby. These classes were held in a modern simulated apartment--an atmosphere that encouraged a home-like and nurturing environment. The parents seemed to enjoy bringing the babies to class and showing off what they had learned. Following the parenting class, the males gathered for a popular group session for airing feelings about being fathers without pressure or guilt.

Agency
Division of Indian Work
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Mary Ellen Dumas, Executive Director
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Terry Janis, Project Manager

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Ronald McKinley,
Program Officer

Operating since 1952 under the auspices of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, the major goal of the Division of Indian Work (DIW) is to provide social services to the Minneapolis American Indian community. The DIW building is located in South Minneapolis, a neighborhood with the largest urban concentration of American Indian people anywhere in the United states. The agency serves over 33,000 clients per year; 80% are American Indians (Chippewa, Sioux, Winnebago, and 25 other tribes).

Services for teenage mothers were already well-established by the time the Collaboration began; nonetheless, reaching and serving teen Indian fathers proved to be difficult. With support from the Minneapolis Foundation, in the fall of 1983, a male staff person was hired to manage the Teen Father's program; he worked closely with the woman who coordinated ongoing services for teenage mothers. Fathers were invited to join young mothers in attending a weekly Parenting Class, taught by a Red Cross nurse. A Father's Support group and a special Father-Child Activity Time were established as well.

Male participation in these group activities was sporadic at best. Young fathers seemed hesitant to come to DIW for on-site services--perhaps, staff members speculated, because the agency was so closely affiliated with the church. Rather than giving up, though, the male staff member hired to work with teen fathers made increasingly concerted efforts to contact his young clients and provide them with information and assistance by going out into the community and making home visits. This strategy proved relatively effective. By the end of the first year of the Collaboration, the manager of the Teen Indian Father's project concluded that his regularly scheduled rounds of home visits were "the best thing we have going."

These home visits helped DIW staff to establish rapport with young fathers and gain their trust. Subsequently, more young men began to take advantage of on-site programming at DIW. During the Collaboration's second year, a New Parents Group--offering teen parents and parents-to-be support, friendship, information on parenting, direction and education--operated successfully. Young couples were encouraged to attend together; having the support of their partners "made it easier for the fathers to participate." The fact that this group was co-facilitated by a male/female staff team also seems to have contributed to its success. In a similar vein, DIW staff reported seeing more teen parents for couples counseling and extended family counseling. Young fathers also took advantage of a weekly Fathers Support/Educational Group, information referrals to other community resources, and advocacy services in relation to legal, medical, and educational concerns. This array of services met a variety of needs expressed by young American Indian fathers; however, the client group remained relatively limited in number.

At the end of the Collaboration's two years, the program has secured sufficient funding to continue, including support from the United Way of Minneapolis, the Ripley Foundation, the Sheltering Arms Foundation, and the Presbytery of the Twin Cities. In addition, some teen fathers are supported through their participation in the Adolescent Family Life Collaboration.

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Dr. Kathryn Pyle,
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Located in a sprawling complex in the East Falls section of Philadelphia, the immediate neighborhood of the Hospital is a working-class white one; however, it borders the predominantly black urban ghetto of North Philadelphia and serves a primarily poor, black population caseload. Each year, the hospital works with approximately 200 young women between the ages of 12 and 17. Prior to the beginning of the teen father project, they had encouraged male partner participation in all aspects of the pregnancy although relatively few teenagers had taken advantage of this opportunity. However, the hospital set out with new commitment to attract and serve teen fathers with the backing of the Philadelphia Foundation.

Recruitment began as a responsibility of the hospital's social worker who was already working with the young mothers. However, due to her heavy workload, she turned recruitment over to the Project Coordinator--which proved to be an effective recruitment strategy. In fact, social workers notified the Project Coordinator immediately whenever a teen father accompanied his partner to the Prenatal Clinic; thus, the Coordinator made an initial contact with young men on-the-spot. In addition, during the course of the two years, the program moved away from its original emphasis on young men who already had children to an emphasis on pre-natal involvement. Young men were encouraged to participate in pre-natal classes and, toward the end of the pregnancy, in pre-labor classes as well. Indeed, several teen fathers were present at the delivery of their children. There also was a great deal of individual personal counseling done with these young men around issues that included self-esteem, relationships to their partners, and future goals. Many were referred to other programs for vocational and GED programs. Parenting skills and child development classes were held once a week, as well, where fathers brought their children and learned the basics of childcare for them.

The Teen Father Program services has garnered several private funding sources to support continuation of the program: the Philadelphia Foundation has made a substantial third-year award, and additional monies have been obtained from the Cassatt Foundation and the Dohlfinger-McMahon Foundation.

Agency
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Diane Turner, Director
John Lass, Coordinator

Local Funding Source
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522 S.W. Fifth Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

Greg Chaille,
Program Coordinator

The National Council of Jewish Women's Insights Project (NCJW) located in a two-room office,had been serving teen mothers for two years primarily through hospitals and outreach programs. In doing so, the staff discovered a desire for services expressed by the teen fathers. The target population of NCJW Insights is predominantly working-class white (80%), with important minority groups of blacks and Asians. In collaboration with the Oregon Community Foundation, NCJW Insights began services to teen fathers.

The community outreach seems to have been one of the strongest components of this program. When a young mother delivers her child, a staff member from NCJW Insights visits her, bringing the newborn a gift and information about services for the young woman. At the same time, the counselor informs her about the teen father program and asks her for her partner's name, address, telephone number, and permission to contact him. The counselor working with the males then contacts the young father.

Beyond hospital outreach, NCJW Insights was also able to raise community awareness of the needs of teen fathers. Referrals were forthcoming from outside agencies, thus allowing Insights to serve youth prior to the birth of the child, as well.

In addition to outreach activities, the program offers individual counseling, relationship/couples counseling, and parenting skills classes. The program has a strong employment piece, as well, due to the skills and interest of the outreach staff person. For example, he has worked with the teen fathers to help them write resumes, do mock interviews, and learn to read and understand employment ads in the newspaper. Many of these services were done on home visits--a particularly effective way of reaching these young men and often the female partners as well.

The NCJW Insights Project will continue, with collaborative funding from the Oregon Foundation, and a package of other local funding sources, for another year. Through its participation in the Adolescent Family Life Collaboration, NCJW Insights, will also support some teen fathers through the office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs for three years. In addition, the United Way of Portland offers financial support.

Agency	Local Funding Source
Y. W. C. A. of Dutchess County 18 Bancroft Road Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 (914) 452-3077	The Area Fund of Dutchess County 9 Vassar Street Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
Del Halstead, Director Scott Smith, Counselor	Caroline Morse, Administrator

Located in a building which was originally part of a large estate, the YWCA has been serving teen mothers for 13 years; on occasion, they have worked with teen fathers during the four years prior to the beginning of the Collaboration. Dealing with about 60 teen parents at any one time, the population is approximately 45% white, 45% black and 10% Hispanic. The program operates out of a small office at the YWCA; due to the fairly suburban location of the building, though, teen parent groups are held in buildings closer to the center of the black community. Initially, services for the teen fathers consisted primarily of inclusion in the home visits to teen mothers, with invitations to group educational/rap groups as well. With the aid of the Area Fund of Dutchess County, the YWCA began to expand its programs for young fathers.

The most successful component focused on individual counseling, self-esteem, family problems, vocational goals, and parenting skills. The outreach program--so critical to this population--changed over the two years. It began with a "crisis approach", primarily utilizing referrals from agencies who were rather crisis-oriented themselves. However, it moved to a more grass-roots approach, identifying young men who had relationships with their children and were interested in enhancing those relationships. The program staff established a connection with the staff at Dutchess County jail, providing outreach services to that population, as well.

Initially, hiring a male from the community raised some difficult issues for this organization. For example, the outreach person was the only male in the organization; in addition, he worked only part-time. Based on the experiences at other sites, the lack of at least one full time staff member was critical. In addition, he was paid a relatively low salary compared to those available to males in the "outside world". This was partly due to the unavailability of extra funds; but also there was an understandable unwillingness of the administration to fund this position at a higher level than its other (female-staffed) positions.

The Teen Father Project in Poughkeepsie continues with funds from the Poughkeepsie Youth Bureau and the United Way.

Agency
Face to Face Health and
Counseling Service, Inc.
730 Mendota Street
St. Paul, MN 55102
(612) 772-2539

Local Funding Source
The St. Paul Foundation
1120 Norwest Center
St. Paul, MN 55101

Mariam Noland, Vice-President

David Kienzle, Executive Director
Jan Fausch, Program Director
Ellery July, Outreach Worker

For nearly fifteen years, Face to Face has been committed to meeting the special health needs of adolescents. This agency provides teens with a number of services: health education, medical examinations, mental health counseling, and career training/job placement. Face to Face received community-based funding for its participation in the Teen Father Collaboration from the St. Paul Foundation; these funds were not, however, specifically earmarked for services to young men, but were to be used for teen parents in general, at the discretion of the agency.

Face to Face is located in the commercial district of a predominantly white, working class neighborhood. Its well-equipped clinic and comfortable offices are on the second floor of a bank building. The agency serves some 2,500 clients per year; typically, about 90% are young women.

From the outset of its work with young fathers, Face to Face emphasized job training and employment, inviting young men to join ongoing programs that had been designed to serve young women. Following a cycle of pre-employment classes, the goal was to place young parents of both sexes into work situations where their on-the-job training could be facilitated by volunteer work place mentors. In addition, the agency planned to incorporate fathers into classes led by clinic staff members on such topics as childbirth, child development, family planning, and parenting skills. Finally, a Fathers Support Group was planned, and the agency expected to be able to refer young fathers to other support-and-education opportunities which exist in the St. Paul area.

Face to Face enjoyed some early success in providing job training and placement services to young fathers. Without exception, these young men came into the agency by way of referral by their female partners (who were also being served by the agency). By the middle of the

Collaboration's first year, the agency instituted some staffing changes, including the hiring of a male social worker/counselor--a relatively small part of whose time was committed to working with young male clients.

In spite of great expertise in program planning and an excellent record of providing services to young mothers, Face to Face encountered serious difficulties in getting young men to come into the agency. Staff members speculated that several factors might have accounted for this: not enough staff time dedicated exclusively to male clients, the lack of an outreach worker, and insufficient support from both the Board and the Executive Director for working intensively with males.

Currently, Face to Face does not have specific funds to work with young fathers exclusively, as has been the situation throughout the Collaboration. However, partners of the 15- to 22-year-old mothers are encouraged to be involved in the pre-natal programs. All agency services are available to fathers, although none are designed exclusively for them. Continued limited service to these young men is anticipated.

Agency
Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Project
Family Service Agency of San Francisco
Sunshine H. S.
1325 Florida St.
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 821-5340

Local Funding Source
The San Francisco Foundation
500 Washington Street
San Francisco, CA 94110

Christina Cuevas,
Program Executive

Amy Williams, Project Director
Robin Jackson, Counselor
Sally Brown, Data Specialist
Dana Francis, Counselor

During most of the Collaboration, the Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Project (T.A.P.P.) was located at the San Francisco General Hospital, located directly across from a city school for pregnant teenagers. The primary site houses the San Francisco Department of Social Services, the San Francisco Public Health Department, and several other social agencies as well. They serve about 250 individuals--primarily black (40%) and Hispanic (35%), with smaller proportions of white, Asians and Native Americans. The San Francisco Foundation served as the primary funding sources for the Teen Father Project.

Initially, there was some concern at T. A. P. P. about serving teen fathers from both the staff and the teen mothers. Staff felt reluctant partly because their strong feminist philosophy led them to feel that the females were the more deserving clients. In addition, the added work of recruitment initially fell to the already over-taxed counselors of teen mothers. The teen mothers, however, seemed apprehensive about having to share the staff's time. The bases for these initial reservations were eventually overcome, though, (e.g., the Teen Father Project staff gradually took on increasing recruitment responsibilities), and the numbers of teen fathers served grew steadily.

T.A.P.P. was dedicated to encouraging and helping their teen fathers establish paternity; however, there were serious barriers which needed to be addressed in the process. For example, the agency most involved with this process was set up to reimburse AFDC funds by collecting child support; thus, they would not establish paternity for fathers who were under 18 or unemployed. In addition, the teen fathers felt some fear of the responsibility concomitant with the establishment.

Despite these barriers, T.A.P.P. viewed paternity as "an insurance policy" for the teens, and continued to work with local authorities to create liaison to help the teen fathers at least acknowledge paternity—the initial step in the paternity adjudication process.

In addition to these advocacy effort, T.A.P.P. offered a number of services as part of their case management approach of providing services on- and off-site through the assignment of a "continuous counselor". For example, the male support groups which met off-site worked well. Teen fathers reported going out of their ways (e.g., traveling through hostile neighborhoods) to get to the group because they enjoyed the fellowship. In addition, individual counseling of the fathers and their partners was utilized heavily. Another popular program component was the educational/vocational counseling both on and off the premises. In addition, there are a large number of services available for referral: poly-drug abuse educational counseling, child care, and general service agencies to assist in problem areas such as housing, food and financial assistance, and medical treatment.

The Teen Father Project continues beyond the termination of the Teen Father Collaboration, thanks to a continuation grant from the San Francisco Foundation, and applications for funding from the state-wide Adolescent Family Life Program, Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Program, and the San Francisco Public Health Department. As with several other sites, services for some teenage fathers are supported by the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Program through their participation in the Adolescent Family life Collaboration.